



# **FIRST YEAR UMPIRE GUIDE**

## **Fast Pitch**

2022

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This First Year Umpire Handbook – Fast Pitch (2022) was created by the Alberta Softball Umpires Association (ASUA) Education Committee for the use of softball umpires in Alberta to develop and improve their skills and knowledge. The materials in this Handbook are based on information and images adapted from the World Baseball Softball Congress and Softball Canada.

For additional umpire resources, check out the WBSC or Softball Canada websites, or ASUA resources:

- WBSC website: <https://www.wbsc.org/documents/c/softball-umpire>
- Softball Canada Umpires website: <https://softball.ca/programs/umpires>
- Softball Canada Umpires Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/SoftballCanadaUmpires>
- ASUA Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/albertaumpires>
- ASUA Website: <http://www.asua.ca/>



## SECTION I – Getting Started

### A. WHY BECOME AN UMPIRE?

There are many reasons why people umpire:

- Financial
- Give back to the game
- Exercise authority
- Earn respect of players, coaches, fans, friends and colleagues

Work on your improvement in small steps, improve one thing and then go on to the next.

- U UNIFORMITY** – maintain consistency
- M MOBILE** – always HUSTLE and be in position
- P PRIDE** – be professional in attitude and dress
- I INCONSPICUOUS** – be confident, but not cocky
- R REVIEW** – the rule book and this Manual for mechanics
- E EXCELLENCE** – continually strive to the best you can be

### B. ROLES OF AN UMPIRE

In performing their duties, a competent umpire takes on many roles.

1. An umpire represents their league, Provincial/ National body, the umpiring fraternity, and the sport of softball. From the moment umpires enter the ballpark, people will judge you, based on your appearance and behavior. First impressions are very important.
2. An umpire is a Decision Maker. At the very core of umpiring is the ability to observe the game and make timely decisions based on those observations and the rules of softball. Your decisions must be made fairly, impartially, without emotion or bias and within the spirit of the rules.
3. An umpire must be a Communicator. You must be able to talk and listen effectively to your partner(s), players and coaches. Umpires must also use proper and easily recognized signals.
4. Umpires are Team Players. You must support your partners by always being in position to help them and not submit any suggestions or opinions concerning the other umpires' decisions until requested by those umpires.

To effectively carry out these roles, a good umpire must have a sound set of skills and attitudes as detailed throughout this manual.

### C. RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Umpires must ensure the game is played safely and fairly, not allow any player, coach or administrator to unfairly influence a game or any of its participants, and handle conflicts quickly and with dignity.

**KNOW THE RULES:** Umpires need to know the rules, the intent of the rules, the spirit in which they are to be enforced and the fairness to be adopted in the application of the rules.

**USE PROPER MECHANICS:** Using accepted mechanics allows umpires to be in the best position possible and to communicate their decisions with clarity.

**DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVE GAME CONTROL:** As an umpire, you must always present yourself as professional, courteous, approachable while also being a firm decision maker.



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## D. HELPFUL HINTS FOR UMPIRES – DO’S AND DON’TS

### DO:

- Study rules regularly
- Take pride in your work
- Always strive to improve yourself and your umpiring
- Stay in shape
- Hustle
- Be pleasant and professional
- Be approachable
- Be courteous, but firm (control the game)
- Be alert in thought and action
- Be truthful
- Be punctual
- Be neat and well-groomed
- Avoid unnecessary conversation with players and managers
- Know the ballpark and ground rules
- Forget the bad days and the players that gave you problems. Tomorrow is another day
- Keep the plate, bases, and the pitching rubber clean
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Be on top of the play
- Stay focused whenever necessary
- Be clear, crisp, and meaningful when making calls
- Work with and back-up your partner(s)
- Keep your cap, shoes, ball bag, and uniform items clean
- Keep your hands off the players or coaches
- Use the energy necessary to make a call believable, but never embarrass a player.

### DO NOT:

- Go out on the field with a chip on your shoulder
- Be overly technical. Use common sense!
- Call the strike overly out loud when the batter obviously swings at and misses the pitch
- Make excuses to anyone at any time! It won't help
- Look for trouble. You'll find plenty of it without looking
- Get lazy. No one respects or appreciates an umpire who doesn't hustle.
- Chew tobacco, smoke or vape when on the diamond.
- Try to out-take the players, coaches, or managers. Let them do the talking and when they have said enough, make them Play Ball
- Make any of your calls too soon. It is better to be a little late in making the call than to have to change your decision
- Have to hear everything that is said or respond to the spectators
- Tell the players what to do, or how to play their position.



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## E. INTERACTING WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS

### Fellow umpires

Being a member of an umpiring crew is like being a member of a partnership. You are in it together to obtain a desired outcome – a well officiated game:

- Be respectful, treat others as you would want to be treated yourself
- Work together, support each other, and maintain a united front

### Coaches

Umpires and coaches have a role to play in any game. Understanding how those roles interrelate can give you an appreciation of the coach's role and how you can better work together:

- The coach's job is to defend and motivate his players
- See the coach as a professional, he will do likewise
- Use all your communications skills, be a good listener
- Remain calm, stay in charge, manage the situation
- Keep conversations one on one

### Players

Some things you can do to get along with players:

- Treat them with respect
- Keep your comments general in nature
- Acknowledge a good play, fair play and displays of sportsmanship
- Let them start the conversations

### Fans

Fans are there to cheer for and support their team. If there are problems with the fans let the home team or tournament officials deal with it. Umpires cannot win at trying to manage fans. Enter and leave the field as a crew, ignore comments from the fans and if amongst the fans do not comment about the game.

## F. UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE

You only get one chance to make a first impression. Your appearance will make a lasting impression on those who see you. It will make a statement about who you are and what you are about.

- I am a professional
- I care about my umpiring
- I care about the game, the players and the coaches

These are strong messages to send to players, coaches and fans. If you look the part, they will give you the benefit of the doubt and assume that you are knowledgeable and able to umpire. All clothing should be clean and properly worn.



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For a first-year umpire, your uniform includes:

- Shirt – Carolina/ light blue or navy blue golf-style
- Pants – charcoal grey or navy blue (not jeans); make sure shin pads fit comfortable under the pants
- Shoes – black, clean and shined/polished
- Cap – navy blue, short peak to fit under your mask.
- Belt – black
- Navy ball bag – plate umpire only



## G. EQUIPMENT

- Black mask and harness. Black throat protector if not built into the mask.
- Plate umpires can wear a black mask/helmet combination, which resembles a hockey mask.
- Ball/strike indicator – used by all umpires..
- Brush – every umpire must carry one.
- Line-up holder/ notepad and pen/ pencil
- Shin guards with knee protection - fit under the pants.
- Chest protector – fits under the shirt.
- Sunglasses – Sunglasses are to be removed when discussions are held with coaches or players. Sunglasses should never be worn on top of the cap or hooked into the belt. If they are not needed, remove the sunglasses from the field of play completely.



## H. GAME DAY

### PRE-GAME

**Establish a pre-game routine:**

- Arrive at the site the same amount of time before each game, dress in the same order, make sure your pre-game with your partners covers the same items each time.
- Be confident before walking onto the field that you can now give full attention to the game.

**Equipment Check:**

Umpires should check equipment to be used in the game for noticeable defects and anything obviously illegal or unsafe. Bats should be checked for any dents (metal bats) or any obvious damage. Helmets must have double ear flaps and should be checked for cracks and missing padding.

**Plate meeting with Coaches:**

- Plate umpire introduces himself/herself and crew
- Allow coaches to introduce themselves
- Go over ground rules



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## DURING THE GAME

### Pre-Pitch Preparation:

Pre-Pitch Preparation helps umpires anticipate a play prior to each pitch, understand better where they may need to move and react quicker by having mentally rehearsed the game situation in advance. The following are the examples of points on which to focus before every pitch:

- Number of outs?
- The count (balls and strikes)?
- Where are the runners?
- Where are the fielders?
- Potential situations that might occur?
- Possible umpire's movements depending on where the ball is hit?

Once you take the field, make your routine a part of your game. Get set the same way, at the same time for every single pitch. yourself tiny mental breaks after each pitch and refocus for the next one.

### Rain, Darkness, Grounds:

The calling of a game for rain or darkness is a judgment call. There is always pressure to allow the game to continue but the safety of the players, fans and umpires is the governing factor. The plate umpire makes the decision, but should check with his/her partners.

### Lightning:

When lightning occurs, safety is the most important thing in determining the suspension and resumption of play. If lightning is seen and thunder is heard within 30 seconds, the game should be suspended and not resume until a minimum of 30 minutes has elapsed from the last sighting of lightning.

### Ejections:

The following should be considered when deciding whether to eject a player or coach from a game:

- Use of profanity directed at an umpire or vulgar personal insults; accusations of bias or cheating.
- Deliberate physical contact with an umpire or another player.
- Throwing equipment in a reckless and dangerous manner.
- Refusal to stop arguing or delaying the game after the umpire has provided adequate opportunity to make his/her point. The umpire should warn the player or coach to return to their position or the dugout, or they will be ejected.
- Arguing balls and strikes after being warned.
- Use of gestures, throwing uniform items, a towel, or other items from the dugout or while arguing.

## AFTER THE GAME

- Return the game balls to the home team.
- Leave the field by the most convenient route, usually through the dugout area of the winning team.
- Always exit the field together with your partners.
- Only engage in crew congratulations or handshakes when you are away from public observation.
- Avoid mingling or moving through players. If a player or coach wants to shake your hand, do so quickly and keep walking.

After the game, talk to your partner about any close calls or weird situations that arose. Ask for constructive feedback and advice. If you have questions, talk with a mentor or senior umpire.





## SECTION II – Definitions and Terms

### **Base Line**

The imaginary straight line between home and 1B, 1B and 2B, 2B and 3B, and 3B and home plate.

### **Base Path**

An imaginary straight line between the base and a runner (advancing or returning to the base) when a play is being made on the runner.

### **Batter Runner**

A batter who has finished a turn at bat but has not yet been put out or reached 1B.

### **Calling - Making the Call**

While in the set position, the umpire must see the interaction of the four essential elements: the ball, the defensive player, the runner (offensive player), base within their field of vision. Track the ball with your eyes, allowing the ball to turn your head into the play.

On force plays, just prior to the thrown ball reaching the receiver, change your focus to the ball, the fielder and the runner, watching all the elements come together. Once you have made your decision on the play, rise from the set position, signal and verbalize your call, using appropriate emphasis and voice.

On tag plays, watch the thrown ball into the fielder's glove and follow the ball and glove to the area of the tag, while always having the runner in your field of vision as the fielder begins to move towards the area where the tag will happen. With the Four Essential Elements in front of you, judge whether the runner was obstructed and that the tag was made prior to the runner touching the base. Stop, set, see the play and make the call and make the signal and verbal call, using the appropriate emphasis and voice.

If required, adjust your position to best see all the Four Essential Elements.

### **Calling Position**

The subsequent movement or adjustment, usually one or two steps from the Primary Position to physically see the tag and to make an informed judgment. Never have a fielder between you and the tag; a runner between you and the tag; or a base between you and the tag.

### **Clear the Catcher**

The plate umpire will clear the catcher whenever a play follows a pitch. To clear the catcher, step back with the foot away from the catcher's turn (with a right-handed batter and the catcher turning to the right, step back with your right foot; if the catcher turns left, step back with the left foot). This will increase the distance between your body and the catcher. When properly executed, the movement prevents contact between the plate umpire and the catcher and allows the umpire to move to observe the developing play. Do not remove your mask until you have cleared the catcher.

### **Dead Ball Signal**

To indicate that time is out and the ball is no longer in play, raise both hands above your head, arms extended, palms forward and call "Dead Ball!"

### **First-base Line Extended**

An imaginary line that extends the first-base fair/foul line into foul territory behind home plate for an unlimited distance. The plate umpire will assume a position on the first-base line extended in several instances including: to render fair/foul decisions on batted balls to the right of home plate; to observe action at first base as another runner scores, or as a starting position on selected tag plays at home plate.





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## Four Essential Element Theory (FEET)

The Four Essential Elements are:

1. The Ball.
2. The Defensive player.
3. The Offensive players.
4. The base or the area of the play.

## Hammer

The final position of the strike or out signal. Hold your right arm up to the side and away from the body at an angle of 90 degrees, and the hand closed. The hammer is held long enough to convey the decision with conviction. The arm is brought down prior to moving the feet.

## Holding Position

A position in foul territory, halfway between home plate and 3rd base, 4-5 metres (12-15 feet) off the foul line where the plate umpire can observe all Four Essential Elements and be ready to move to their next position. Umpires use the holding position while watching the play develop to determine which base they are required to cover.

## Hustle

Brisk, purposeful and appropriate movement at all times during a game.

## In/Out Theory

On hit balls to the infield, base umpires should stay on the outside of the base paths and either stay at their starting position or move to the correct calling position. On balls to the outfield, base umpires should rotate into the inside of the diamond.

## 90-Degree Angle – Tag Plays

The umpire should be 90 degrees to the path of the runner into a base or the application of the tag on a play not involving a base.

A tag play should be viewed from an approximate distance of 3-4 metres (12 feet) allowing the umpire to see the four essential elements: the ball, the defensive player, the runner (offensive player), base or area of play within their field of vision.

## 90-Degree Angle – Throws/ Force Plays

The umpire should be 90 degrees to the path of the ball (throw) to a base.

A force play should be viewed from an approximate distance of 5-6 metres (18 feet), allowing the umpire to see the four essential elements: the ball, the defensive player, the runner (offensive player), base within their field of vision.

## Overthrow

A thrown ball that goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field or becomes a blocked ball.

## Primary Position

The initial location assumed by an umpire to rule on a play as a runner approaches a base or as a play develops. The umpire's line of vision forms a 90-degree angle to:

- The path of the runner on a tag play into a base.
- The application of the tag on a tag play not involving a base.
- The throw on force plays.



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## Ready (Starting) Stance on the Bases:

The ready position is the body position a base umpire takes immediately prior to the pitcher bringing his hands together for the pause and up until the pitch is released.

As the pitcher assumes the pause position (hands together), take the ready position by placing your feet at a comfortable distance apart (normally shoulder width) staying relaxed but still. As the pitcher releases the pitch, soften the knees (slightly bend), adjust body weight to the balls of the feet and draw the hands close to the body at belt level.

If the ball is hit, push off the ball of the outer foot and move to the appropriate position for a possible play. If the ball is not hit, relax until the start of the next pitch but always be aware of pick off plays, passed balls, etc. that may cause you to move to a position to call a play.

## Secondary Position

The subsequent location assumed by the umpire after the initial play, or after a runner has obtained a base.

## Sell call

A movement similar or identical to an umpire's basic signal but delivered with added flair or emphasis to demonstrate the importance and/or correctness of the umpire's decision.

## Set Position on the Bases

This is the position a base umpire should take, prior to making a call on a play. The set position mimics the ready position in that the feet are spread apart, normally shoulder width, knees are slightly bent with the hands drawn towards the body at belt level.

On a force play, the umpire moves to a position to see the play; 5-6 metres (18 feet) back, 90 degrees to the throw; on plays at 1B, do not go beyond 45 degrees to the base. Once at this position the umpire should stop, set, see the play and then make the call.

On a tag play, the umpire moves to a position that allows the umpire to see the four essential elements and their interaction, 3-4 metres (12 feet) back and not in line with the throw, begin at 90 degrees to the runner's base path and just short of the leading edge of the base or home plate and then adjust to see the four essential elements interact.

Remember you may have to move to see these four essential elements come together as the tag is being made position the umpire should stop, open up, set, see the play develop and then make the call.

## Set Position at the Plate

Bend at the knees, not the waist. Your eyes should be at the top of the strike zone, so you can look down through the zone with an unobstructed view of the entire zone. The hands should be in front of and close to the body, but not supporting the body. The plate umpire must be completely set when the pitch is released and keep the body motionless as the pitch is delivered. See "Tracking the ball at the Plate" below See "Stance" – the position the plate umpire begins prior to dropping to the "set position." The set position must be mirrored for both right and left handed batters. The position must be balanced and comfortable, but not relaxed.

## Slot

The area between the catcher and the batter when the batter is in their natural stance and the catcher is in their normal crouched position. For right-handed batters, the umpire's right ear is on a line with the left edge of the plate. For left-handed batters, the umpire's left ear is on a line with the right edge of the plate.



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## Square to the Base

When set for a play at any base, your head, shoulders and feet should be in line and perpendicular to a line from your location to the base. By taking a position square to the base, you will avoid a tendency to turn away from the play before it is complete.

## Stance

The position the plate umpire establishes behind the catcher. A heel/toe stance is recommended. The legs are at least shoulder width apart or wider. The pelvic area (belt buckle) aligned with a spot between the top middle and the outside corner of the plate. For the heel/toe, the slot foot should be in the slot pointing directly at the pitching plate and in line with or slightly in front of an imaginary line extended from the catcher's heels. The non-slot foot is behind the catcher in line with or slightly in front of an imaginary line extending from the heel of the slot foot. This foot may angle up to 45 degrees.

## Tag Play

A legal tag is the action of a fielder in touching:

- a batter-runner or runner who is not in contact with a base, with the ball securely held in their hand(s) or glove. The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after tagging the batter-runner or runner, unless that player deliberately knocks the ball from the hand(s) or glove of the fielder. The runner must be tagged with the hand(s) or glove with which the ball is held; or
- a base with the ball securely held in their hand(s) or glove. The base may be touched with any part of the body to be a legal tag, (e.g., the fielder could touch the base with a foot, with a hand, sit on the base, etc.) This would apply to any force out or appeal situation.

## Time - Granting when Requested

A player/ coach can request time, but the umpire does not have to grant it. This request should never be granted if the pitcher has separated his/ her hands in starting the pitch. Call the pitch a strike or ball depending on whether it passed through the strike zone or not. If the 'not to pitch' signal is up and the pitcher throws anyway (or throws while "TIME" has been called), leave from behind the catcher towards the open batter's box and call "TIME – NO PITCH". Wait until it is safe to return, put on your mask and go behind the catcher once again.

## Timing on Bases

Read the play, choose a primary position, allow the play to be completed, locate the ball, watch for control of the ball, make a decision and then signal the decision.

## Timing at the Plate

Ensure the ball has completely passed over the plate and into the catcher's glove before making a decision on each pitch. Make the decision first, and then make the call. The verbal call is in the "down" position and signal is in the "up" position. The hammer signal should be given immediately after the verbal call. The feet do not move until the signal is complete.

## Tracking

Following the ball with your nose. Letting the ball bring you to the play.

- **On the Bases:** Observe the fielder release the ball. Track the flight of the ball until just before it reaches the fielder, then switch focus to the fielder's glove and follow the ball into the glove.
- **At the Plate:** Observe the entire flight of a pitch with only slight head movement. Head movement is so the umpire will see the ball. It is not a signal of pitch location. See the release of the pitch, track it to just in front of the plate, switch focus to the batter's zone, then see the ball into the catcher's glove. This will allow you to make your decision when it crosses the plate and assist on outside pitches by seeing where the catcher's glove is located when the ball is caught. Don't lose the ball, but follow it into the glove with your nose.



## SECTION III – Signals

### A. COMMUNICATING THROUGH SIGNALS

Communication is essential to umpiring and the first line of communication is the umpire's signals. These signs enable one umpire to let a fellow umpire know the game situation on a specific play. These decisions are also relayed to the players, coaches, and spectators by their usage.

You must have good signals to be a good umpire. Every signal starts from a set or ready position. The feet are planted in a solid, wide base at least shoulder width apart. In order for a signal to convey its message, it must be seen. The first move before giving any signal is, without moving your feet, to come to a full standing position.

Once a signal is seen, everyone who sees it must understand what it means. Signals are designed to convey strength, confidence and authority. Any movement while giving a signal is always forward toward the play. The signal is held long enough to convey conviction, then the arms and hands are brought back into the body, thus completing the signal, before moving to the next position.

Signals should not be used unnecessarily. Poor signals are confusing. Always know what the body is saying. Learn to send the message you want to send. Make all signals crisp and strong.

Do not echo a partner's call (except for illegal pitches or foul balls with runners on). If there is no play, a call or signal is not needed. Some examples of when a signal is not needed are:

- The ball clearly going over the fielder's head or bouncing in front of the fielder.
- A pitch fouled directly to the backstop or over the backstop.
- The ball is overthrown or completely missed by the intended receiver.
- A runner clearly obtains a base or home before the ball arrives or the ball is clearly dropped.

### B. STANDARD UMPIRE SIGNALS

#### *OUT*

From a standing position with feet shoulder width apart, pull the left hand/arm into the midsection of the body. Extend the right arm straight up with the palm of the hand facing the ear. Bring the right forearm slightly forward while clenching it into a fist (this is the Hammer). The right upper arm and forearm should be at a 90-degree angle. Verbally call "Out". Bring the right arm back into the body before moving the feet or moving to the next position.



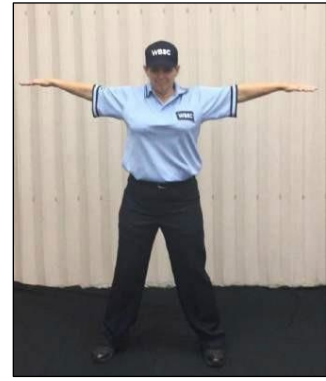


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## *SAFE – NO CATCH – NO TAG – NO INFRACTION – TRAPPED BALL*

From a standing position with feet shoulder width apart, bring both arms into the chest at shoulder level with the palms of the hands facing down. Extend both arms straight out horizontally with the palms down. Verbally call “Safe”, “No Catch”, or, “No Tag”. Bring both arms back into the body (similar to a Ready Set position) before moving the feet or moving to the next position.



## *DEAD BALL – FOUL BALL – NO PITCH – TIME*

From a standing position with feet shoulder width apart, raise both arms straight up with palms forward. Arms should be at about a 35- to 40-degree angle from the body.

Verbally call: “Dead Ball”, “Foul Ball”, “Time”, or “No Pitch”. If the ball is close to the line, the feet should be straddling the line. When the plate umpire signals “No Pitch”, the signal may be accompanied by movement to the open side of the plate for better visibility.



## *FAIR BALL*

From a standing position with feet shoulder width apart, extend the arm closest to the field horizontally at shoulder height and point, with either open hand palm forward, to fair ground. Do not make a verbal call. If the ball is close to the line, the feet should be straddling the line and use a pumping motion with the arm closest to the line.







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## FAIR/ FOUL INDICATOR

On any fly ball close to the foul line the umpire should straddle the line, feet shoulder width apart, and, depending on the resulting action rule the ball fair, foul, or an out. Always give the ball status first, i.e., fair or foul then catch or no catch.



FAIR



FOUL



OUT

## DELAYED DEAD BALL

Extend the left arm straight out at shoulder height, parallel to the ground. The hand is in a fist with the fingers of the fist facing forward. Display the signal continuously while the runner is between the bases where the obstruction occurred unless a rundown develops or you have to move.



## INFIELD FLY



Fully extend the right arm above the head with the hand in a clenched fist. Verbalize: "Infield fly – batter is out". If ball is close to a line say: "Infield fly – batter is out, if fair".

Either the plate or base umpire may make this call. Once the plate umpire makes the call, it should be echoed by the base umpire using the same signal but verbalizing only: "Infield fly".

If the plate umpire does not make the call (forgets or is not certain of the call) and a base umpire, after eye contact communication with the plate umpire, is certain the ball is an infield fly; the base umpire may make the call.

## GROUND RULE DOUBLE

Fully extend the right arm above the head with the index and middle finger showing on the hand verbally say "Two Bases". Do not circle the arm.





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## PLAY BALL

Hand motions used by the plate umpire to indicate the ball is in play. With arm extended toward the pitcher, the umpire may use a beckoning motion with an open hand, a pointing motion with an open hand or a pointing motion with one or two fingers extended. The signal may be accompanied with the verbal call: "Play!" The verbal call may be used without any signal.



## DO NOT PITCH

Either arm of the plate umpire extended straight out directly at the pitcher with the hand open and the palm of the hand facing the pitcher.

The 'not to pitch' signal is conveyed if the pitcher is about to quick pitch the batter, or if you are not ready to work or if you have granted "TIME" to the batter before the pitcher has broken the pause. The signal is an open hand aimed at the pitcher's face with the fingers spread wide.



## STRIKE

The verbal call of "Strike" is made in the down/set position. The signal is made in the "up" or "going to the up" position. The feet do not move during the signal. The left hand/arm is pulled into the midsection of the body. The right arm is

- 1) Extended straight up with the palm of the hand facing the ear then followed by bringing the right forearm slightly forward while clenching it into a fist (this is the Hammer),
- 2) Extended up and forward as the hand closes in a fist. In either style, the right upper arm and forearm should be at a 90-degree angle. The signal is held long enough to convey the decision with conviction. The signal is finished by bringing the right arm back into the body before stepping back or moving the feet.



## FOUL TIP

This is an optional signal. It may be used every time the ball is a foul tip or used only at times when the ball being a tip is not completely obvious. Bring the left hand in front of your body, mid-chest or higher, with the palm or back of the hand facing you. With an upward motion, brush the fingers of the left hand with the fingers of the right hand. This signal is always followed by a strike signal.







# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
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## COUNT

Raise both arms up and in front of the body. Each arm/hand should be seen peripherally when the umpire is looking at the pitcher. Balls are shown with the fingers of the left hand. Strikes are shown with the fingers of the right hand. Consecutive fingers should be used in displaying the count. A verbal call may accompany the signal and, if used, should be as follows: “2 balls and 2 strikes”. The count is given to the pitcher and held long enough for any other player to see it. The hands should be turned to increase visibility.



The count should be given:

- When requested.
- After a delay in the normal flow of the game.
- After all dead ball situations.
- Whenever the next pitch would create a change (i.e., three balls and/or two strikes on the batter).

## C. UMPIRE-TO-UMPIRE SIGNALS

Umpires communicate amongst themselves through umpire-to-umpire signals. These signals are only intended for umpires and, unlike most signals that are given up and away from the body, umpire-to-umpire signals are given lower and closer into the body. Like all signals, these signals are vital to good communication within the crew. These signals should be precise, dignified and used consistently. To enhance visibility and recognition the signals should always be given against a contrasting background such as the shirt or pant leg.

### INFIELD FLY SITUATION ON

The right hand, palm open, on the left chest indicates the infield fly situation is in effect. The infield fly signal should be initiated by the plate umpire just prior to the batter stepping in the box. Base umpire should acknowledge, to the plate umpire, by returning the same signal. The signal should be given before every batter when an infield fly situation is possible.



### INFIELD FLY SITUATION OFF

The right hand used in wiping motion from the left elbow to the left wrist indicates the infield fly situation is no longer in effect.





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## HOW MANY OUTS

To verify or determine how many outs there are, the umpire looks to a partner and clenches the right fist against the right thigh.

## HOW MANY OUTS? – RESPONSE

The responding umpire should indicate the number of outs by putting the appropriate number of fingers against the right thigh.



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## WHAT'S THE COUNT?

To request the count from a partner, place both opened hands against the chest.

There is nothing wrong with verbalizing the request: "Partner, what count do you have?" This, however, draws attention to the umpire and, if it is not necessary, umpires should avoid drawing attention to themselves.

## WHAT'S THE COUNT? – RESPONSE

The responding umpire should indicate the correct count by the fingers on the chest.





## SECTION IV – Mechanics

### A. GENERAL MECHANICS

Mechanics is the physical part of umpiring – the positioning umpires take on various plays. It is where you go when something happens. Mechanics is being in the right place, or the best place, at the right time. If we are at the right place at the right time, we vastly increase the odds of having good judgment because we can see what happened from the best possible view.

Always move with briskness and purpose. Never stroll or walk.

You cannot be in the right place at the right time if you do not hustle. We have a huge area to cover. Hustle does not mean fast; hustle means moving efficiently and with purpose. Always move with briskness and purpose. Never stroll or walk.

#### To get to the right position you:

- Must know where you need to be
- Must know where the ball is so you can move without getting in the way of a thrown ball
- Must find the optimum route to travel
- Must be thinking three steps and one play ahead.

Once you get to where you need to be, the job is only beginning.

You must see the play, use your judgement, give the proper signal using the right amount of emphasis and you do all of this while making it look natural. Make sure your calls are correct and signals strong.

#### The things you look for in choosing a position are:

- The ball in front of you.
- The base, the runner, and the fielder in front of you.
- 90 degrees from the throw on a force play.
- 90 degrees from the runner's base path and just short of the leading edge of the base on a tag play.
- 5-6 metres (18 feet) from a force play – to obtain the big picture.
- 3-4 metres (12 feet) from a tag play.
- Arrive at the play before it happens. It is far better to be in position for a possible play and not have a play develop, than to have a play happen and not be there.

#### Once in position, you want to:

- Stop, set, see the play, and then make the call for every play.
- Be outside the diamond if the ball is in the infield – puts the ball in front of you.
- Be inside the diamond if the ball is in the outfield – puts the ball in front of you.
- Move parallel with the runners or the flight of the ball.
- On tag plays
  - never have the runner between you and the tag.
  - never have the fielder between you and the tag.
  - never have the base between you and the tag.
- Do not move your feet when making a call. Keep your feet in a wide stance. This is stronger and you are prepared to move efficiently to your next play.
- Hold your position at the conclusion of a play until the pitcher has the ball in the circle and all runners have stopped on a base.



# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
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## General Guidelines

- If you finish an inning with a controversial call and feel you will be a target for remarks by standing in your normal position, move somewhere else.
- If there is no play, no call is needed.
- Obvious uncaught fly balls do not need a “No Catch” signal.
- On tag-up plays, line up to see the tag and then move to a primary position.
- Do not grant “Time” unless needed. The pitcher must have the ball in the circle and all runners must be stopped on a base before “Time” is called.
- No need to clean bases unless they cannot be seen. Do not break the flow of the game.
- Being consistent is not good enough. You must call an accurate strike zone.
- Do not touch a ball that is in play, a player, or a coach.
- Do not carry messages from a coach or player to your partner.
- Watch for touched bases.
- Communicate on a continual basis with your partner (s).
- Always know the count, the number of outs and where the runners are.
- Plate umpire initiates or wipes off the infield fly signal each time a new batter steps into the box.
- Anticipate, but do not assume.
- Just give the signal when an out is obvious on a fly ball with no runners on base.





# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
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## B. PLATE MECHANICS

### At the Plate

- Work the slot – be sure you can see the outside corner at the knee.
- Use a heel/toe stance.
- Use the same stance on both sides of the plate.
- Be set before the pitch is released.
- Be no deeper behind the catcher than a closed fist between your non-slot knee and catcher's back.
- Once set, do not move your body.
- Track the ball with your nose.
- Use the strike zone defined in the Rule Book.
- Do not verbally describe a pitch or use a hand signal.



### For strikes

- The verbal call is in the down position. The signal is in the up position. The signal should be immediately after the verbal call.
- Use a strong hammer at 90 degrees. Hold it long enough to show conviction. Do not move the feet until the conclusion on the hammer.
- Always face the diamond when you are selling strike three so that you are facing the batter's box area and can see if the ball has fallen out of the catcher's glove
- If you have a swinging strike three, just use your hammer.
- Be aggressive; call borderline pitches strikes.
- Never say, "Strike three, you're out."

**Strike, Strike, Strike 3**

### For balls

- The word "ball" must be verbalized.
- Ball is said in the down position before moving or starting up
- The ball call is said in the same tone, with the same timing and emphasis every time. No "ball," is more important than another ball. A ball is just, "Not a strike."
- Say "ball" only. If it is ball four, then emphasis should be placed on the four.
- Never say "Ball four, take your base," and don't point to first base.



**Ball, Ball, Ball, Ball 4**

### After every pitch where no other play occurs

- Step back and relax when the pitch is over and the call is made.
- Be alert to the batter for any reaction or conference request.
- Watch the catcher for any play.
- Prepare for the next pitch.





# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
[WBCS Fast Pitch Manual and Softball Canada Umpire Resources](#)

## 1. Stepping into the Stance

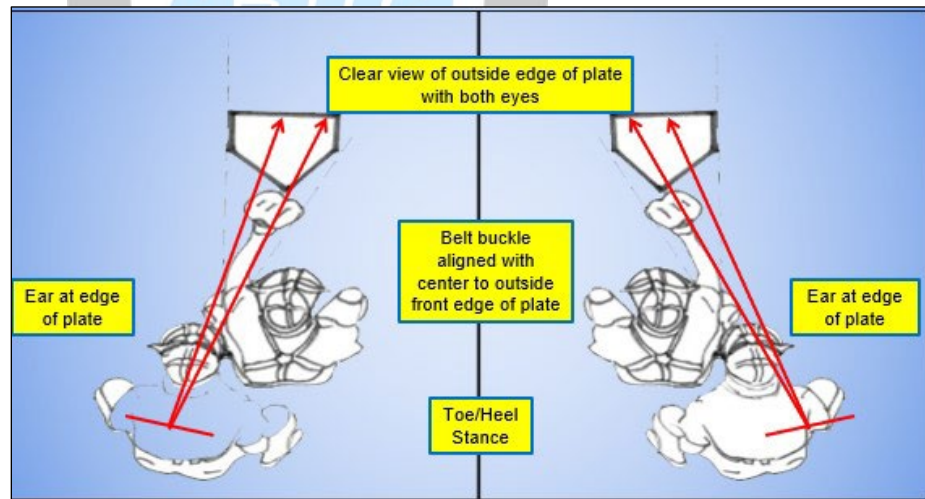
From your relaxed position, step in behind the catcher with your inside foot (non-slot foot). Once set behind the catcher's foot, step into the staggered stance with your outside foot (closest to the batter/ slot foot). If it is more comfortable for you, then use a few small steps to position yourself in the slot by using an offset square stance, where your outside foot (closest to the batter/ slot foot) is a bit more forward than your inside foot (behind the catcher/ non-slot foot) - referred to as heel/toe. Line up your pelvis or belt buckle with a point between the top middle of the plate and the top outside corner of the plate.

You must always feel balanced with most of your weight distributed equally between the balls of your feet and your heels. Keeping your feet spread at least as much as double the width of your shoulders will put you in perfect position. Having your feet too close together can cause more movement of the upper body. Dig in, get balanced and feel comfortable. Relax before the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate. Step into your stance when the pitcher steps onto the pitcher's plate. Always remain upright until the pitcher begins the pitching motion. Next drop into your slot set position while maintaining your stance balance and upper body control.

## 2. Working the Slot Position

The "slot" is the area between the batter and the catcher. It is one in which the umpire's inside ear (next to catcher) and the inside edge of the plate are in alignment. It is at best something that may vary and drift marginally to accommodate the stance of the catcher and batter, but it remains on the inside edge of the plate. Make sure you can have an unobstructed view of the entire plate with both eyes when in your slot set-up stance.

The slot also affords the umpire the maximum visibility to complete strike coverage and the ability to see the ball in the entire zone. Foul balls will tend to deflect away from the slot or directly over the plate. You must always strive to see the release of the ball from the pitcher's hip to the arrival in the glove. Remember to track the ball with the nose between these two areas.



If the catcher blocks your view, obtain an unobstructed view of the strike zone/ pitcher's release point, by setting your head above the catcher's helmet even if it is above the top of the batter's strike zone. It is important that the catcher does not block your view.

If the batter takes away the inside corner, make a small adjustment to your stance. If you can't see the corner, any pitch that is inside must have crossed the plate. More strikes lead to more cooperation from the batter.



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## 3. Moving to the Down (Set) Position

Try using a smooth and brisk motion to drop into your set position. This technique will include doing a multitude of things all at once.

- Keep your head square to the plate.
- Your back should feel a bit straight and stiff, although it never really is completely.
- Use your legs to go up and down.
- Bend at the knees and only slightly at the waist.
- Timing is very important in dropping to the set position. You should never drop too soon or too late (you will be moving on the pitch and this changes the strike zone).
- The body must not move once you drop to the set position.



Your eyes will be set at the top and inside corner of it – looking down through the strike zone. A pitch delivered at your eyes and your nose is a ‘strike’ on the inside and at the top. If you must look up or inside, you probably have a ‘ball.’ Lock and hold your position. Remain still during the entire pitch. Your shoulders might be a bit offset, due to your footwork. This may give you the feeling that you are just about to sit in a chair, but it is much more effective than bending your back and trying to look up.

The hands should be placed where they are ‘most likely’ not to get injured. Most umpires place them in front, between the legs which helps relax you and also protects.

Keep your entire body still while preparing to judge the pitch, even if the catcher moves in front of you after you are set. Your head should not move until just before the pitch arrives in the glove. Track the ball with your nose and then use a slight head tilt to see the ball into the glove.

## 4. Footwork

Always set your foot behind the catcher first then your outside foot. It is recommended that your feet be at least double your shoulder width. The taller you are the more important it is to widen your stance. A good wide stance by a taller plate umpire, requires less drop and bending of the knees, when moving to the set position for batters – particularly shorter batters.

## 5. Tracking the Pitch

This is probably the most critical aspect in improving your strike zone. Begin to pick up the ball from the pitcher’s hip. Next you should lock in the batter’s normal zone when they are swinging the bat. Follow the ball through the zone and watch the ball all the way into the catcher’s glove, using the pop of the glove as a timing tool. This technique is a great way to double check the location of the ball, create a natural delay in your timing and ensure that you have seen the ball all the way to the catcher’s glove.

## 6. Timing and Rhythm

Umpires who make calls quickly on every pitch will appear to be guessing. Slightly delay your call somewhat after the ‘pop.’ Timing after the ‘pop’ should be deliberate and consistent. You verbally call the ‘strike’ while in the set position and the signal starts as you immediately rise up.





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## OTHER PLATE UMPIRE RESPONSIBILITIES (see also Section III – Signals)

### Making calls on batted balls (Fair or Foul)

- Foul tips – give the fingertip-to-fingertip brush away signal, followed by the hammer.
- Balls touched in foul territory – foul ball signal with the verbal call “Foul.”
- Ground balls that are hit foul – if beyond a base or hitting anything – foul ball signal with the verbal call “Foul.”
- Ground balls hit fair beyond a base – signal by pointing repeatedly towards fair territory – NO VERBAL.
- Fly balls that are hit close to a foul line:
  - On first base line, use left arm to indicate fair and right arm to indicate foul
  - On third base line, use right arm to indicate fair and left arm to indicate foul
  - Slightly move the arm away from the hip to indicate to yourself the status of the ball while in flight, once status is confirmed:
  - If fair and caught – point fair, give the hammer, and verbally call ‘out.’
  - If fair and dropped – point fair, repeat pointing and sell if required.
  - If foul and caught – point foul, give the hammer and verbally call ‘out.’
  - If foul and dropped – point foul, give foul ball signal and verbal call “Foul.”
- Pop-ups to the catcher near the line – get a proper look and do as stated on fly balls.
- Pop-ups to the catcher when you must vacate – do not watch the ball – watch the catcher’s shoulders. Once the catcher turns, use that foot to pivot and keep out of their way. Then remove your mask.
- Foul balls that are hit close to the screen or towards a dugout – HUSTLE – get in position. Make sure you get to the screen to see about a trapped ball or the ball touching the screen before the catch.



FOUL TIP



FOUL BALL

### Leaving the Plate Area

Leave the plate area from the left side of the catcher. This fits into one of the umpire’s priorities that should include avoiding a collision with the catcher and/or allowing catcher’s their freedom to roam. With no runners on base or a runner on first base only, leave the plate area on the left side and trail the batter-runner toward first base in fair ground down approximately 9 meters (30 feet) (where the 1 metre (3- foot line) begins). Stop close to the line and observe the play at first. You should look for:



- Obstruction and interference, with or without contact between the catcher, pitcher, first baseman and the batter-runner.
- Collisions
- Overthrows
- Blocked balls
- Pulled foot
- Infractions involving the bat
- Spiking committed by the batter-runner
- Violations of the 1 metre (3-foot) lane
- Possible swipe tags or tags made by the catcher or infielders on the batter-runner.



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After moving toward first base with a runner on 1B only, be aware of a possible play at 3B with the lead runner since that would be the responsibility of the plate umpire.

If there is a runner starting at 2B or 3B, the plate umpire must view the actions up the first base line from a position that will not impede any base runners, a position in foul territory on the third base side (called a holding zone) which allows the plate umpire to move to 3B or home, if a throw is being made to either.

You must watch home plate for the touch, glance up the first base line for action and then proceed to the next potential call. The plate umpire must observe a variety of things that would include missed bases, obstruction, interference, and tag-ups.

## Third Base Calls

In making calls at third base the plate umpire should stay in foul territory halfway between home and third base, while watching the play develop. If there is in fact a call to be made on a tag play at third base, cut inside the diamond about two-thirds of the way down to third, move to 3-4 metres (12 feet) from the base and make the call.

The reason the umpire should be inside at this point, is that it is the best position to make the call. If the ball should get away from the third baseman, it is normally going into foul territory and any interference by the umpire will be avoided by being in this position. Here again, we are using the inside-outside theory.

In addition, if the throw is wild and the runner continues to advance toward home, the plate umpire has avoided a collision with the runner rounding third. Another reason would be that from this inside position the umpire will have a 3-5 metre (10-15 foot) advantage in covering any play at the plate.

## Rundowns

When a runner is caught in a rundown, it is important that the covering umpire moves to get the best perspective at both ends of the play. Usually the umpire will be a minimum of 3-4 metres (12 feet) from the runner and move parallel to the base line, unless you are covering the play alone, and it is not necessary to run back and forth with the runner. The umpire must follow the ball and when the actual tag is attempted, move quickly toward or around the play to get the best angle. Be alert for obstruction. Most rundowns are covered by one umpire because they happen quickly.

With a single runner in a RUNDOWN, two umpires should 'bracket' the play as follows:

- Between 1B and 2B – the plate umpire should take the trail position closest to 1B, inside the diamond and the base umpire should take the lead position closest to 2B on the outfield side of the diamond.
- Between 2B and 3B – the plate umpire should take the lead position closest to 3B, inside the diamond, and the base umpire should take the trail position, closest to 2B on the outfield side.
- Between 3B and home – the plate umpire will take the lead position nearest home plate outside the diamond, while the base umpire takes the trail position nearest 3B, inside the diamond.

In all cases, the umpire should communicate, "I've got the lead," "I've got this end," etc. This communication is critical to being able to team on the call, rather than making a possible double call. When two umpires are covering a rundown, the direction in which this runner is moving at the time of the tag will dictate which umpire will make the call. Two umpires should not make the call, even if they are the same call.



## C. BASE MECHANICS

### Techniques on the Bases

Like the plate umpire, the base umpire(s) must focus on every pitch and be ready for any play.

- Watch for illegal pitches.
- Should a foul fly be hit in territory not adjacent to the plate, cover the fielder as closely as the base situation permits.
- Be alert for check swings or hit batsmen.
- Be ready to cover the catcher's attempts to pick runners off bases.
- Between pitches, the base umpire must remain alert for any potential plays.
- Be alert; work your angles on the bases.
- On a close play, sell the call; but on a wide-open play, a routine signal is all that is necessary.
- Whenever possible make all your decisions from the set or ready position.
- Do not give a vocal call or arm signal until you know that the runner is out or safe and the fielder has control of the ball. This will help your timing and eliminate double calls or the dreaded "Out/Safe" call.
- Know where the ball is, and who had it last.
- Hustle is an integral part of good base umpiring technique.

The base umpire indicates decisions by simultaneously giving vocal and physical signals. Umpires signal SAFE when a runner has beaten a play. In calling a runner out, the motion of the arm in the form of a hammer is combined with the word OUT.

Make sure you have the Four Essential Elements (ball, defensive players, and offensive players, and the base or the area of the play) in front. When watching the tag on a slide, make sure the base is in view. When watching the tag play, ensure you are not too close, in order to see all Four Essential Elements in your peripheral view. Move with the tag play as the play develops and the interaction of the Four Essential Elements changes.

In watching force outs, keep your eye on the base and watch for the ball to hit the glove or let the ball take you into the play. Note: Make sure you know from where the ball is being thrown. Never take your eyes off the thrower until the ball is released and let the ball take you into the play.

There are two basic calls an umpire MUST master before being considered as a good umpire:

- 1) Force play
- 2) Tag play.

### The Force Play

As the fielder is getting into position to field the ground ball, the base umpire should be moving into one of the recommended positions. As the fielder releases the throw then, and only then, does the umpire turn into the base. (Let the ball take you into the play. A play cannot be made without the ball.) At this time, the umpire should concentrate on the BASE, where:

- The runner touches it,
- The first baseman is on it, when the ball is caught, and
- The ball is not juggled by the fielder.

An important consideration for the umpire at this point is proper positioning (minimum of 6 metres/ 18 feet from the base). If so, while concentrating on the base, the base umpire can watch the runner coming down the line and at the same time see the ball being caught by the fielder. A position too close to the base restricts the angle, closes the range of vision, and may cause the umpire to get caught in the action.



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Another element in making your decision is sound. While concentrating on the 'base' and allowing peripheral vision to aid you in seeing the play develop, the sound of the ball hitting the glove helps determine which arrived first, the ball or the player's foot hitting the base. Never take your eye off the ball or depend entirely on the sound of the ball hitting the glove for crowd noise could distract you or drown out the sound of the ball hitting the glove.

If proper mechanics are followed as described, the only consideration left to ensure proper timing is a slight hesitation to allow a clear and mental picture to develop, ensuring the proper call.

Consideration must be given toward being consistent in the time it takes to announce your calls. If you are quick on every call and then have an exaggerated hesitation on one call it will appear to the players and fans that you are undecided and guessing. Slow your timing down and don't make a call until the play is completed.

Once the umpire has observed the play come to its completion, has made a slight hesitation, and knows the outcome of the play, it is time to make the decision that will be made known by the 'out' or 'safe' signal.

There are two basic positions for calling force plays at first base:

- On all ground balls hit into the infield, the umpire should move to a proper position in fair territory to see the play; 5-6 metres (18 feet) back, 90 degrees to the throw.
- On plays at 1st base, do not go beyond 45 degrees to the base. Once at this position the umpire should stop, set, see the play, and then make the call.

## Tag Plays

Many of the elements discussed on force plays also apply to tag plays, such as position, angle and peripheral vision especially as the play develops. However, the major difference is in the fact that on tag plays we want you to complete the call with your nose right on the tag.

As the play develops, stay back, further than 3-4 metres (12 feet) initially, keeping the Four Essential Elements in front of you – ball, defensive player, offensive players, and base.

Now as the runner and the ball near that tag area, move to get the best angle to have an unobstructed view of the Four Essential Elements. Let the play carry you into the tag. Normally the best angle on tag plays is 90 degrees from the path of the runner just short of the leading edge of the base or home plate at the point of contact. Move in and around the play if necessary to see the tag and move to find the ball.

Once you have allowed the play to develop, move in on the play, concentrate on whether the tag was made prior to the runner reaching the base or the runner beat the tag to the base. If the runner is in before the tag, the play is over, providing the runner doesn't slide past the base. Hesitate slightly then make your call, SAFE.

If the tag is made prior to the runner reaching the base, hesitate; make certain the fielder has control of the ball, point at the ball with the left hand, and call OUT with the "overhand" out call, making certain you SELL IT.





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## Inside-Outside Theory

If the ball is hit on the infield area, stay OUTSIDE the diamond. In most cases if the ball is hit into the outfield area, move INSIDE the bases. Sometimes at the 2nd base position an umpire may have to stay out to get the proper angle and keep all four elements in front.

## Button Hook

The key to the inside-outside theory is movement and the key to movement regarding the inside-outside theory is the button hook. The button hook is a term used for the method of moving from outside the diamond to the inside.

As you move toward the inside of the diamond you should be:

- concentrating on the runner(s) you are responsible for,
- making sure you do NOT interfere with anyone,
- checking for the tag of the base, obstruction or interference
- glancing to pick up the ball in the outfield.

## Helpful Hints for Base Umpires

- Hustle.
- Move on all pitched, batted and thrown balls.
- Call all your plays in fair territory except when the play dictates for you to be in foul territory.
- Don't make a call until the catch or play is completed.
- Don't let players or coaches call plays for you.
- Check to make certain all bases are secure and clean and the pitcher's plate is clean.
- Do not make a sell call on obvious out, safe, fair or foul calls.
- Line-up runners on all fly balls to the outfield, as outlined in tag up procedures in this manual.
- Watch runners touch all bases.
- Slow up runners when the ball becomes dead because of foul balls, etc.
- Take positions that will keep you out of the player's way. Check with the fielders every time you move to see that you are not obstructing their view.
- Never walk from one position to another; hustle and the ball players will follow your example.
- Make your close calls with a strong enthusiastic voice.
- On rundowns, the responsibility of the call is determined by the direction the runner is running towards.
- Don't touch balls thrown to you by the defensive team, as there may not be three outs.
- Recognize your next play and prepare for it.
- When calling, "TIME" for an injured player, stay nearby until the coach or trainer comes out. Then leave the area.
- Do not signal/echo foul balls from the bases.
- Be ready to call illegal pitches.
- Watch for the position of all runners at the time of throw on overthrows.
- Watch for a pitched ball swung at (assist if requested by the plate umpire).
- Watch for batter hit by pitch in the batter's box (immediately signal dead ball)
- Watch for batter hit by ball out of the batter's box (signal dead ball)
- Watch for runners leaving base before the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- Watch for interference.
- Watch for obstruction.



## SECTION V – Game Situations

### APPEAL PLAYS

Appeal plays are plays on which an umpire can only make a decision if requested to do so by a player or coach. Appeals may be made while the ball is alive or dead.

#### Appeal plays include:

- Missing a base
- Leaving a base on a caught ball before the ball is first touched
- Batting out-of-order
- Attempting to advance to second base after reaching first base
- Illegal substitutions
- Use of an unannounced player under the replacement player rule
- Illegal re-entry
- Use of an unannounced player under the Designated player rule
- Runners switching bases they had occupied.

#### Live ball appeals:

- Must be made on runners attempting second base after passing first base.
- Can be made on a missed base or leaving too soon on a caught fly ball.
- Are made by tagging the runner attempting to go to second base. The runner or base may be tagged on a missed base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball.

Runners may attempt to advance during a live ball appeal and if the appeal is abandoned to make a play on another runner, the appeal may still be made after the play.

#### Dead ball appeals:

- Only allowed after all play has ceased and time is granted.
- Players may ask for time to make an appeal
- May be given verbally or with the ball.
- If to the wrong umpire, refer the player to the correct umpire by indicating the umpire and saying their name – “Susan, they are appealing number 8 missing second base”.

#### Guidelines regarding appeals:

1. Appeals must be made before the next pitch and before all defensive players have left fair territory on their way to their bench or dugout area or in the case of the catcher, the catcher has left the catching position.
2. Any fielder may make an appeal, provided they are in the infield when doing so. In case of the last play of the game before the umpires have left the playing field.
3. Fourth out appeals are allowed in cases where the third out is obtained by playing action or a previous appeal and a successful fourth out appeal would nullify a run.
4. An appeal for *Illegal substitution*, *Use of an unreported player* under the Replacement Player Rule, *Illegal Re-entry* and *Use of an unreported player* under the Designated Player Rule may be made at any time while the player is in the game.
5. An appeal for Runners switching positions on the bases may be made any time until all runners, who switched positions are in the dugout or the inning is over.



# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
[WBSC Fast Pitch Manual and Softball Canada Umpire Resources](#)

## BATTER HIT BY PITCH

Batters are awarded first base anytime they are hit by a pitch (unless the batter made NO attempt to avoid the pitch), and the call is valid even if the ball only contacts their uniform. You should immediately call "Time".

A batter cannot be awarded a base when hit by a pitch if the ball was in the strike zone. This occurs when the batter is crowding the plate, leaning over to try and force the pitcher to pitch outside. If the batter swings at and is hit by a pitch, the swing takes precedent and it is a strike, and if on the third strike it is a 'dead ball' and 'strike three.'

## CATCH

To be considered a legal catch, the defensive player must have control of the ball in either hand and control of his/her body. There is no time limit, however control of the ball and the body must be established to the umpire's satisfaction.

If the fielder drops the ball while transferring the ball from the glove to the hand for a throw, it is considered a legal catch provided all the elements of a legal catch were established before the transfer.

To be ruled a catch, a fielder must have secure possession of the ball before stepping or falling into dead ball territory. A fielder may be stepping on the dead ball line or in the air and make a legal catch, but no foot may be touching the ground or an object completely in dead ball territory at the time of the catch.

## CATCHER'S OBSTRUCTION

If a catcher obstructs a batter by tipping the bat or holding his glove over home plate and the bat hits the glove on the forward or backward swing, the batter is awarded first base.

Exception: If the batter hits the ball, reaches first base safely and all other runners advance at least one base, the obstruction is ignored. It is also ignored if the above does not happen, but the offensive manager wants to take the result of the play on the batted ball.

## CHECK SWINGS

On a ball called by the umpire, the catcher may request the umpire to check with his partner to determine if the batter swung at the pitch. When the catcher requests you to check with your partner, take off your mask, step to the umpire and ask - "Swing?" The response should be Yes, with a strike signal or No with a safe signal.

The umpire being asked should be sure if the batter attempted at the pitch or not. Things to consider are:

- bat location (Over the plate)
- wrist action (wrists bent);
- location of the ball (was the batter merely trying to get out of the way of the pitch).

The Plate umpire should give the count after any check swing situation.

Only go for help if you have called the pitch a 'ball.' Once you have called the pitch a strike, you cannot check with your partner.





# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
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## CONFERENCES

When a coach is granted time for an offensive or defensive conference, you must record the conference on the line-up card. Move up on the line nearest the team having the conference. Advise the coach that the conference was charged.

If a coach is checking on an injury, accompany the coach to ensure that the injury is the only issue that the coach is dealing with. If no other messages are delivered, do not charge a conference.

If the umpire is the cause of a delay in the game, do not charge a conference if the coach is talking to a player. Get the game going as soon as you are ready. It is not an offensive conference when a coach and batter talk while you are sweeping the plate or retrieving game balls. Nor is it a defensive conference if a coach stands with the pitcher in the pitching circle during the time between innings.

It is not a defensive conference if the coach makes a pitching change.

## DEAD BALL AND DEAD BALL SITUATIONS AT THE PLATE

The plate umpire has primary responsibilities for determining if the ball has entered dead ball territory.

Once the ball enters dead ball territory the umpire should call "Dead Ball" and signal with both arms up and palms extended forward. The umpire should get as close as possible to the area where the ball is about to enter dead ball territory.

Umpires not involved in calling the dead ball should mentally note the location of the runners at the time of the pitch or throw or when the ball became dead.

### Dead Ball situations at the plate include:

- Hit by a pitch (*see Batter Hit by Pitch*)
- Hitting the pitch while out of the box or touching the plate
- Hit with a batted ball
- Hitting a pitched ball twice

#### a) Batter hit with batted ball.

Any umpire may make the call:

- If batter is still in box = foul ball
- If batter is out of box = out
- If ball hits the bat twice and bat is still in batter's hands and still in box = foul ball.

#### b) Hitting the pitch while out of the box or on the plate.

- Entire foot out of box, on the ground at time of contact
- Any part of foot touching the plate.
- Ball can be fair or foul
- Dead ball
- Batter is out

This call belongs solely to the plate umpire. It is a dead ball and an out. The bat must have contacted the ball and it does not matter whether the ball goes fair or foul because it is dead on contact. For the dead ball and an out, the batter's foot must be touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or some part of the foot must be touching the plate even if part of that foot is still on the line of the batter's box.



# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
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## c) Hitting Ball a Second Time

Double hits can be extremely tough to see. A double hit occurs most often on bunts and slaps, but it can also happen when the bat, after it is dropped by the batter and still moving, contacts the ball a second time. Remember if the ball hits a dropped bat that is stationary, we have no call. If the bat is out of the batter's hands and hits the ball, this is ruled intentional contact and the batter is out.

If the bat is still in the batter's hands and the batted ball hits the bat, the position of the batter's feet determines the call:

- If both feet are in the batter's box and the batted ball hits the bat or feet of the batter, it is a foul ball.
- If one foot is out of the batter's box over fair territory and the batted ball hits this leg, the batter is out.
- If one foot is in the batter's box and the batted ball hits this leg, the ball should be ruled foul, even if the other foot was over fair territory.
- If one foot is over foul territory and the batted ball hits the foot, it is a foul ball.
- If a ball rolls against a bat laying stationary over fairground it is a fair ball, but if the ball then rolls onto foul territory and is touched or comes to rest, it should be ruled foul.
- If a ball rolls against a bat laying stationary over foul ground, it is a foul ball immediately and this will not change if the ball then rolls onto fair ground.

## ILLEGAL PITCH

- May be called by any umpire.
  - Pause and hand violations are the plate umpire's responsibility.
  - Feet violations are the base umpire's responsibility.
  - Outside the 24 inches of the pitcher's plate is the responsibility of the plate umpire. (Stepping foot has to be within the 24 inches, pivot foot may be outside).
- Illegal pitch calls should be echoed by other umpires.
- Indicate to the pitcher what the infraction was.
- Allow the coach to come out to explain to the pitcher what the infraction was; ensure that strategy is not discussed. Not a conference unless strategy is discussed.
- Warn the pitcher the first time it happens. Then call it when you see it.

The base umpire is responsible for any action behind and in front of the pitching plate. Feet on and off the pitching plate, front and back, as well as the crow hop. It requires a delayed dead ball signal. Allow the play to continue and rule accordingly.

## INFIELD FLY

- Signal infield fly situation to other umpires when it exists. Plate umpire should initiate.
- Either Plate or Base umpire's judgment on "ordinary effort".
- Signal end to infield fly situation.

## INTENTIONAL WALK

- Can be issued at anytime
- Requested by pitcher, catcher or coach
- One walk at a time, runner to touch first before administering a second intentional walk.



# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
[WBSC Fast Pitch Manual and Softball Canada Umpire Resources](#)

## INTERFERENCE AND OBSTRUCTION

**Interference** is an illegal act by the offence that impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Interference is a dead ball (arms up and palms extended) and an out.

For interference calls, a vigorous dead ball signal should be given with both arms extended high above your head, and with a strong vocal call of "DEAD BALL".

- It is important that you step in with authority and take charge.
- Stop any further play as soon as possible, as continued play simply leads to confusion.
- Step toward the violation area, point at the spot of interference with the left hand and give a strong out signal with a verbal call 'INTERFERENCE, RUNNER/ BATTER-RUNNER/ BATTER OUT.'

Three things must always occur on an interference call:

- 1) The ball is dead,
- 2) An out is called, and
- 3) All runners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the interference.

Note: If the batter-runner causes interference, the ball is dead from the time of the pitch.

Crashing into a catcher or fielder who has the ball is an act of interference and, if flagrant, should result in an out and an ejection.

**Obstruction** is an illegal act by the defence that hinders or prevents a batter from striking at a ball or impedes the progress of a runner. Obstruction is a delayed dead ball (left arm out) and an award of bases to the base that would have been obtained had there not been obstruction. Other runners only advance if forced.

Obstruction is the act of:

- A defensive player or team member who hinders or prevents a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
- A fielder who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases while:
  - Not in possession of the ball, or
  - Not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or
  - Making a fake tag without the ball, or
  - In possession of the ball and who pushes a runner off a base, or
  - In possession of the ball, but not in the act of making a play on the runner, impedes the progress of that runner, while he is legally running the bases.

All obstruction calls require a delayed dead ball signal, allowing a runner played on or not played on the same ability to advance. The umpire will protect the runner to the base the runner would have made if there had not been obstruction. (This is solely the judgment of the umpire making the call). If the runner is played on prior to this base and the ball is in control of the defender, a dead ball is called and the award of base(s) made. If the runner advances beyond the base protected, and is tagged out, the out stands and the ball remains live.

A fielder may not make a fake tag (a tag without a ball), on a runner advancing or returning to a base. This is a form of obstruction. The runner is awarded the base that he/she would have made if the fake tag had not occurred. A fake tag could result in ejection.



# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
[WBSC Fast Pitch Manual and Softball Canada Umpire Resources](#)

**Calling Obstruction or Interference** is the responsibility of the umpire to whom the play is coming. If the responsible umpire is involved with another play then another umpire can make the call. Be sure the responsible umpire has not already made a judgment on the play.

Collisions that are neither interference nor obstruction will occur from time to time. All three elements are at the same place at the same time - ball, defensive player and offensive player. If nothing more than the three elements coming together at the same time happens, you have a collision without either interference or obstruction. A safe signal at this point will show everyone that you saw the play and judged that no rule violation occurred.

## RUNNER MISSES PLATE/ BASE

If a runner misses the base/ plate and the fielder misses the tag, the umpire should hesitate slightly to allow the players to finish the play, either the runner reaches to touch the base/ plate or the fielder reaches to tag the runner. If no tag is made, the umpire should declare the runner SAFE. If a proper appeal play is made, the umpire should then declare the runner OUT. There are three reasons for this procedure:

- The umpire does not want to alert either team that the play may not be over, and
- A runner is assumed SAFE until put out. If a proper appeal is NOT made, the runner is SAFE.
- If a proper appeal is made, this is another play and deserves another decision, therefore if the base or the runner is touched, the runner would be OUT.

## THE PITCHING CIRCLE

Once the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, runners must immediately proceed or retreat. The pitcher is under no obligation to do anything. Compliance is on the runners.

## RUNNING OUT OF BASE PATH

Running out of the base path to avoid a tag is a violation. The umpire should point with the left hand indicating that the runner did violate the rules (by running out of the base path) and follow with a strong overhand out signal if needed and verbal call 'OUT.' The ball remains alive, other runners may continue to advance at their own risk and the umpire should react accordingly.

## THREE-FOOT LINE

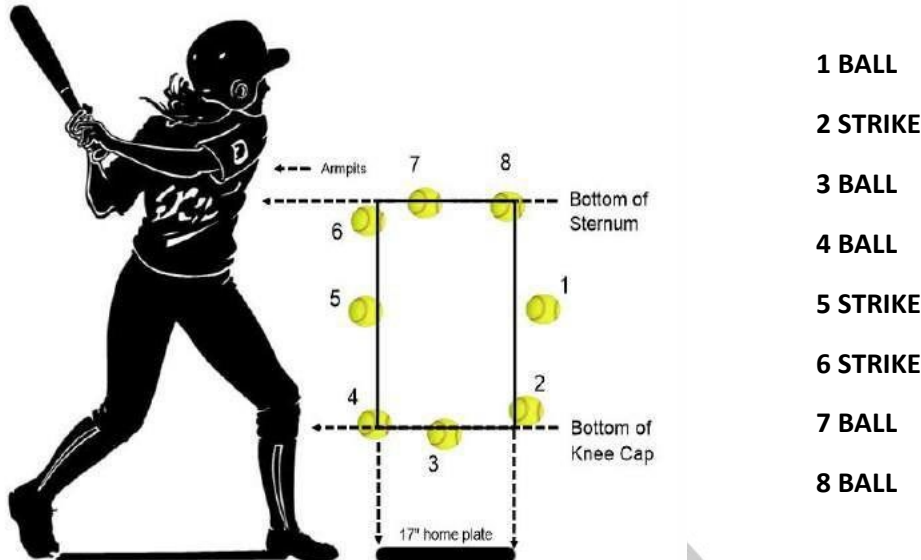
A violation of the 1 metre (3-foot) line is an example of an interference call. The plate umpire should step into the play throwing arms high above the head calling loudly "DEAD BALL". Step toward the violation area, point at the spot of interference by the left hand with verbal call 'INTERFERENCE' and give a strong overhand out signal with verbal call 'BATTER-RUNNER OUT'. At this time, the runners MUST be instructed to return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.



# FIRST YEAR FAST PITCH UMPIRE GUIDE

Contents adapted from:  
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## STRIKE ZONE



The space over any part of home plate between the bottom of the batter's sternum (chest plate) and the bottom of the batter's knee cap, when they assume their natural batting stance. The natural batting stance is the stance the batter takes after the release of the pitch when deciding to swing or not swing at the pitch.

A strike is called the ball is live and runners may advance with liability to be put out when any part of a pitched ball enters the strike zone before touching the ground and the batter does not swing,

## PITCHING RULE – Fast Pitch

- Prior to starting the pitcher, the pitcher must place one or both feet on the pitching plate, and with the hands apart, take a signal or appear to take a signal from the catcher.
- The pitcher must then maintain contact with the pitching plate with the pivot foot and must place the stepping foot in contact with the pitching plate or behind the pitching plate within the 60 cm (24 in) of the pitching plate before starting the pause.
- Once the pause has begun, the pivot foot and stepping foot must remain stationary until the start of the pitch. The heel or toe of the pivot foot or the stepping foot may be lifted and then lowered provided the foot does not move forward or backwards.
- The pause must be held for a minimum of 2 seconds and a maximum of 5 seconds. The pitcher may ask for time during the pause provided the hands remain together or the pitcher steps back off the pitching plate with the hands together.
- The pitch starts when the pitcher separates the hands or begins any movement that is part of the pitching motion. The pitcher's feet may only move forward once the pitch starts.
- The pitcher may step forward with the stepping foot while pushing off from the pitcher's plate with the pivot feet resulting in a drag or a leap. The pitcher's hands must be separated and the pitching arm in motion prior to the pivot foot stopping or if a leap, landing. The pitcher may only push off from the pitcher's plate.
- Upon the pivot foot stopping or if a leap, landing, the pitcher must continue the pitching motion and release the ball towards home plate. The pivot foot may follow through when it lands however the pivot foot may not push off a second time.



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## One Umpire System

In the One Umpire System, you are responsible for every call during the game. It is obvious that not everything that happens will be seen. The single umpire must hustle around the diamond to get to the best possible position to stop and make the call.

With Runners on base, give the lead Runner priority in your positioning. On every hit ball, the umpire must quickly move out from behind the plate and into the Infield for the best view of the play that develops. It is important to always try to keep the ball in view. Take a quick look at the Runners as they touch bases, especially when scoring at home. Watch as the play progresses, anticipate and move towards the base where the first play will occur, be prepared to quickly reset and move towards the next play.

If the first play is potentially a routine call, shift towards where the next play may occur, especially if it is a possible tag play. Try and get into the best position to see the ball, the fielder, and the Runner to give yourself the best possible view to make the correct call. Make sure your position for one play does not put you in the way of a player or a thrown ball.

You must watch for, Tags, Obstruction, Interferences, Touched Bases, Runners passing each other, Blocked Balls, etc.

Try to keep the following **Four Elements** in your vision:

- 1 The ball**
- 2 The defensive player making the play**
- 3 The batter runner or runner and**
- 4 The base or area where the above elements meet**

Any time the ball is thrown, you must know where the runners are in case the ball is thrown out of play. It is always important to hustle. You don't have a partner to assist you. You should never make a call without moving out from behind the plate. When the ball is in the infield and no further play is evident call and signal 'Time' and quickly return to your position behind the plate.

**Conventions**

The conventions used to describe the situations in this manual are:



1. The plate umpire is referred to as 'Plate' or 'P'
2. Runners at 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are indicated with 'R'
3. Movement of the umpire is 
  
 Movement of the ball is 
4. Icons used in this manual:

		
Plate Umpire	Runner	Fielder

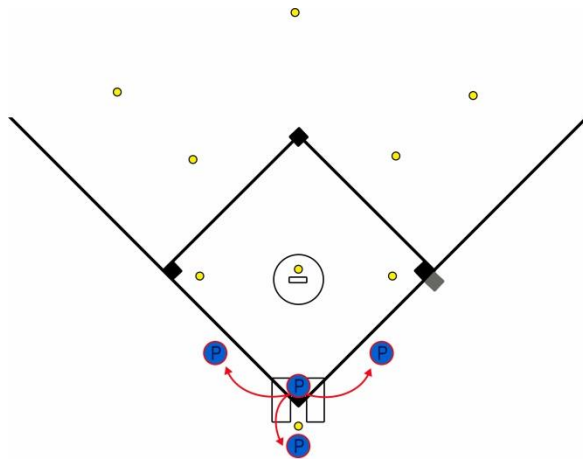
**Plate Umpire Starting Position**

In all cases, the plate umpire's starting position and actions are as follows:

- Sweeps the home plate and checks that the field is clear and ready for play.
- Should take up a position in the slot between the batter and the catcher.
- After each pitch, you should call Ball or Strike, give signals as required and then relax, while maintaining good general awareness.
- Also responsible for calling:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul Balls
  - Batting infractions
  - Safes and Outs
- On every hit exit from behind the catcher via the left (even on a left handed batter) and rotate to your position.
- If the ball is close to the foul line, move to the line and straddle the line to make the fair/foul call.

Plate movement following a batted ball will be explained for each case. Movements shown are examples of possible movements and are meant to be guidelines. Umpire movements should always be dictated by the principle of keeping the four elements in front of you.

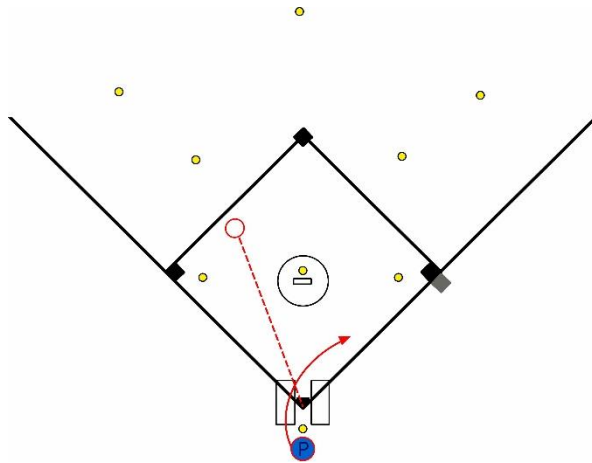
## Starting Position



### Plate umpire

- Move to a position on the side of the team coming off the field
- Hustle the teams on and off the field
- Stand approximately one third from home plate toward first base in one half inning and third base in the other half inning
- Stand about 30cm (1 foot) in Foul Territory off the line
- Stand facing the diamond with your hands relaxed at your sides
- Place the mask under your left arm
- Observe the Warm-Up Pitches (five allowed for each pitcher in the first innings and with each new pitcher. Then three warm up pitches are allowed at the start of each inning after the first)
- Let the Catcher know when the second to last Warm-Up Pitch has been thrown, then say 'one more Catcher'
- Replenish extra ball supply
- Sweep the plate and then assume a position behind the Catcher after the Warm-Up Pitches
- During the first half inning and when there is a change of pitchers, you may wish to put on the mask and observe the Warm-Ups after making the Line-up changes and announcing them to the Official Scorer

## No Runners on Base

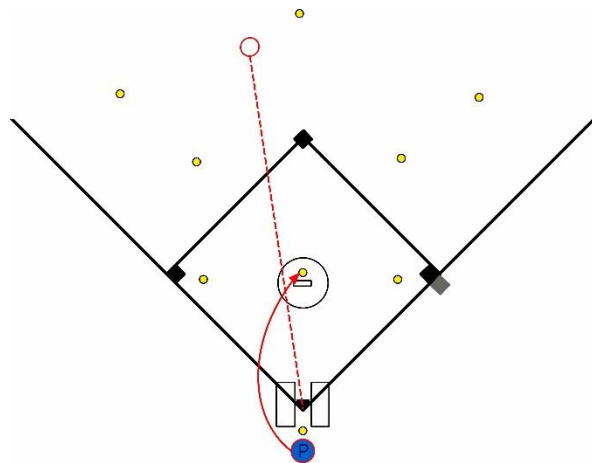


### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics
- On every hit, move out in front of home plate

### Ball hit to the infield

- Hustle out in front of the home plate towards the pitcher
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the Batter Runner (BR) down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased



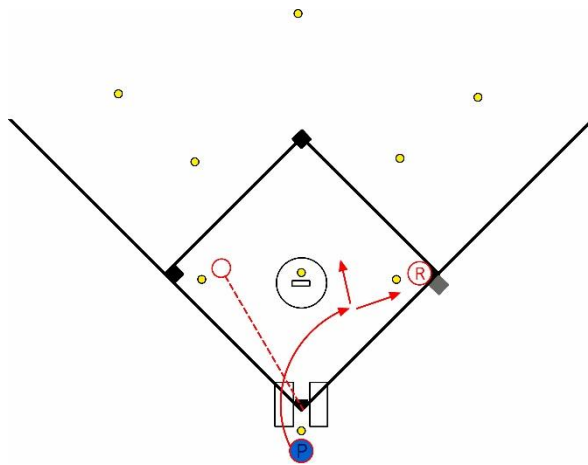
### Ball hit to the outfield

- Hustle out in front of the home plate and move towards the pitcher's area
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased

## Runner at First Base

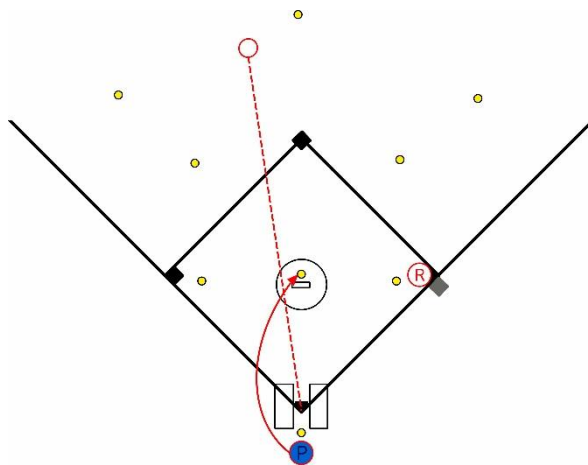
### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics
- On every hit, move out in front of home plate



### Ball hit in the infield

- Hustle out in front of the home plate and move towards the pitcher's area
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop ... Wait ... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased

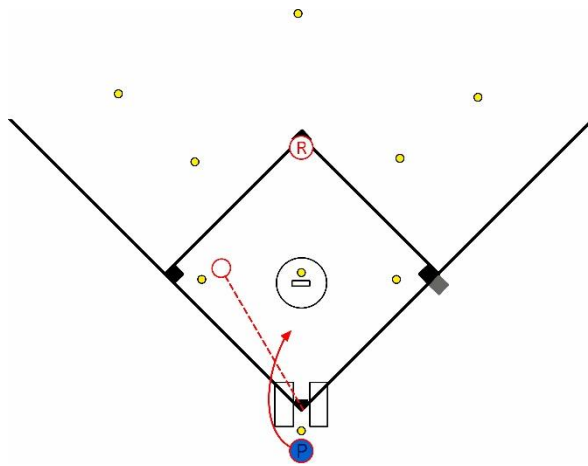


### Ball hit to the outfield

- Hustle out in front of the home plate and move towards the pitcher's area
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the infield and all play has ceased



## Runner at Second Base

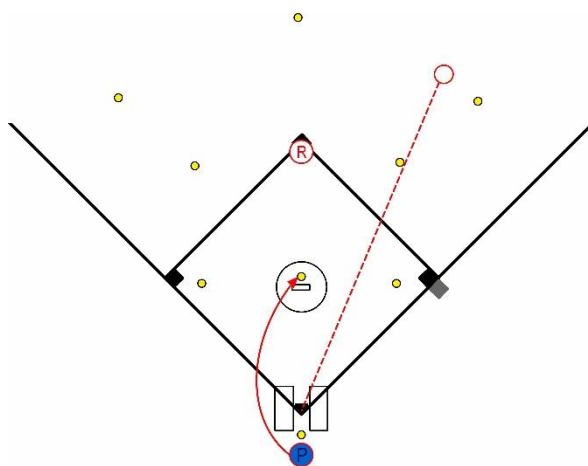


### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics
- On every hit, move out in front of home plate

### Ball hit in the infield

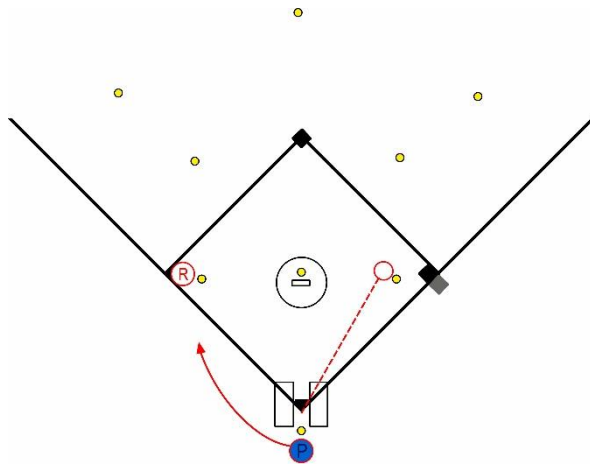
- Hustle out in front of the home plate towards the pitcher
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased



### Ball hit to the outfield

- Hustle out in front of the home plate and move towards the pitcher's area
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased

## Runner at Third Base

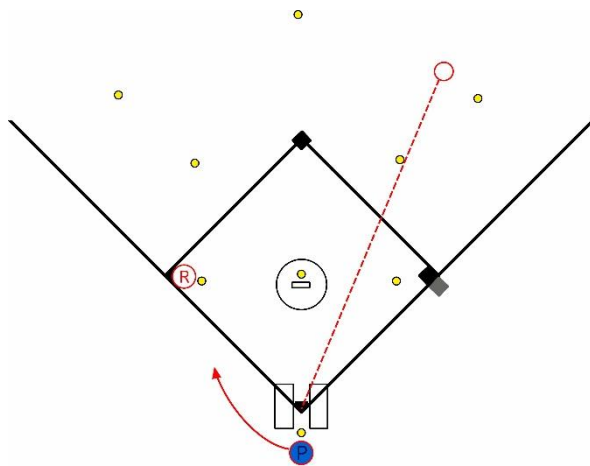


### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics

### Ball hit in the infield

- Move into Foul Ball Territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased



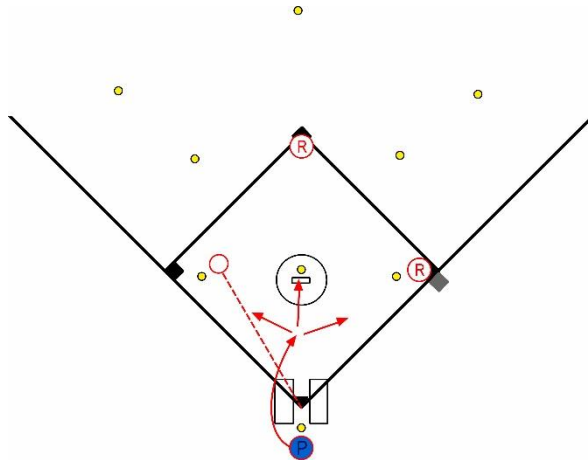
### Ball hit in the outfield

- Move into Foul Ball Territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased

## Runners at First & Second Base

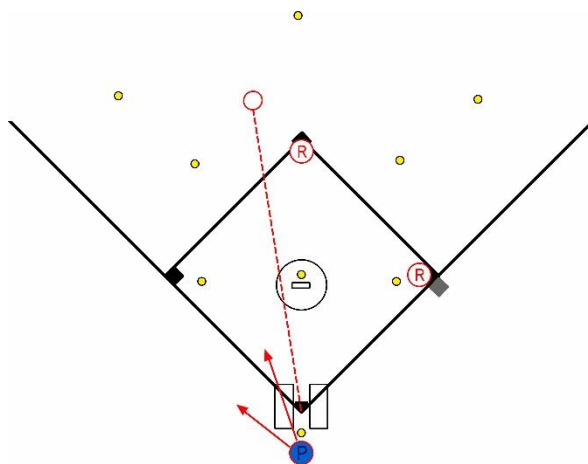
### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics
- On every hit, move out in front of home plate



### Ball Hit in the Infield

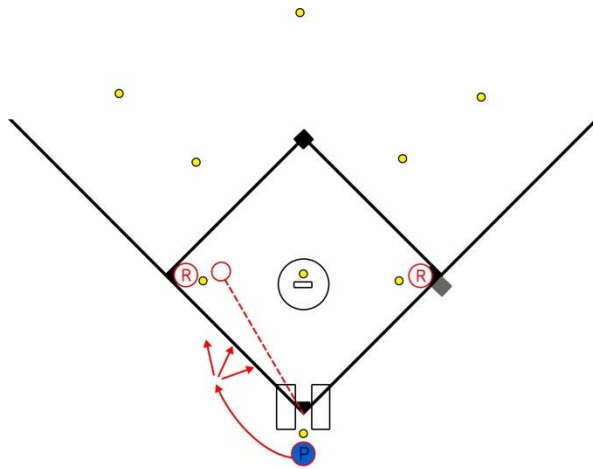
- Hustle out in front of the home plate towards the pitcher
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased



### Ball hit to the outfield

- Hustle out in front of the home plate and move towards the pitcher's area
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased

## Runners at First & Third Base

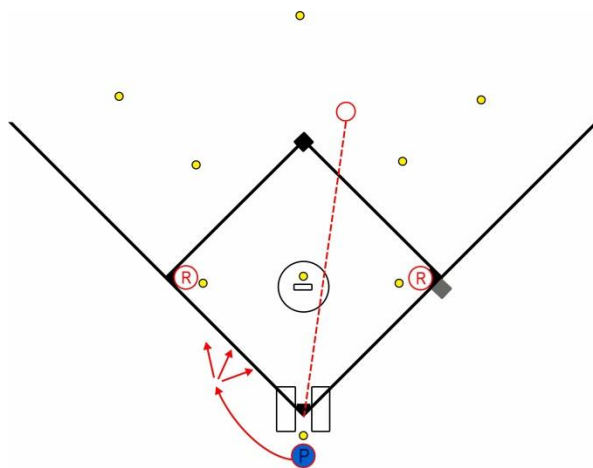


### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics

### Ball hit in the infield

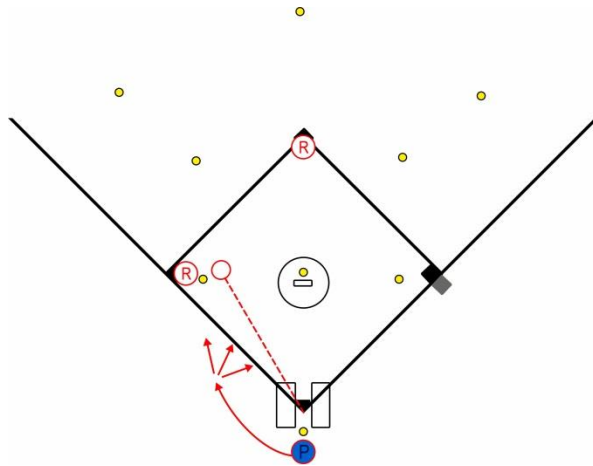
- Move into Foul ball territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased



### Ball hit to the outfield

- Move into Foul ball territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased

## Runners at Second & Third Base

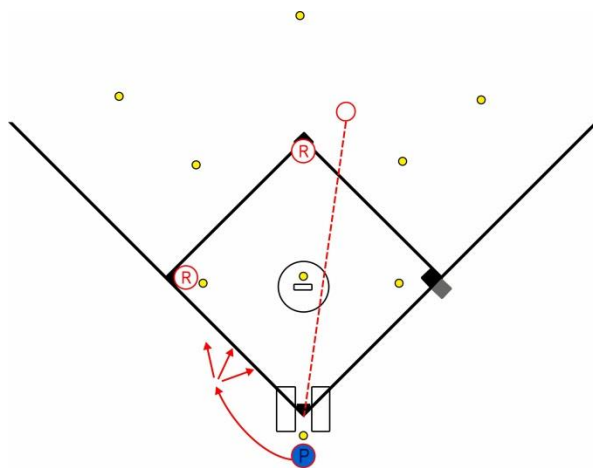


### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics

### Ball Hit in the Infield

- Move into Foul ball territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased

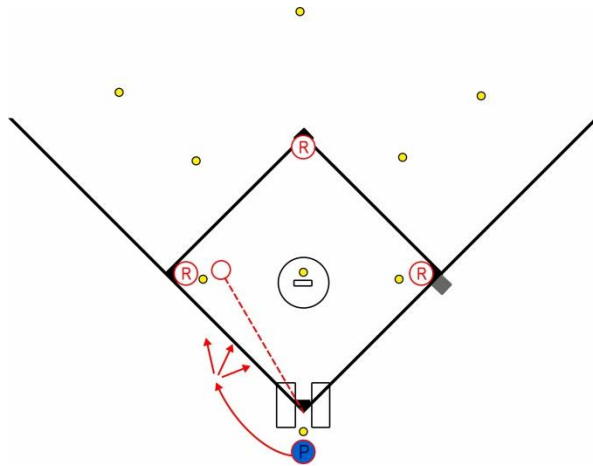


### Ball hit to the outfield

- Move into Foul ball territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased



## Bases Loaded

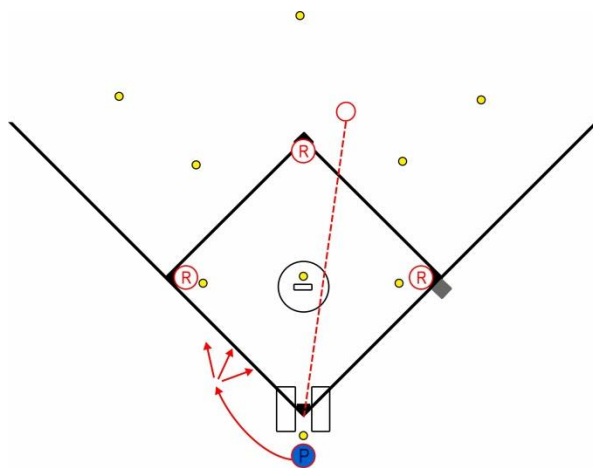


### Starting position

- Take a position behind the Catcher as described in the Plate Umpire Mechanics

### Ball Hit in the Infield

- Move into Foul ball territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Observe the BR down the 1st base line
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- With the ball in the infield, you may call and signal 'Time' when all play has ceased



### Ball hit to the outfield

- Move into Foul ball territory toward third base
- If the ball is hit near the Foul Line, stay close to the line to call Fair/Foul
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Move quickly towards the base where the play will be made
- You may call and signal 'Time' when the ball returns to the Infield and all play has ceased

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## **2 Umpire System (Rotation) Fast Pitch and Modified Pitch**

The 2 umpire system requires that umpires move into positions appropriate for each play. The information referring to positioning and the calling of plays is written for ideal circumstances and for the best possible positioning for the majority of plays. Proper positioning can be achieved if you think in terms of 'keeping the play in front of you'. In order to do this there are four basic elements that must be kept in your vision.

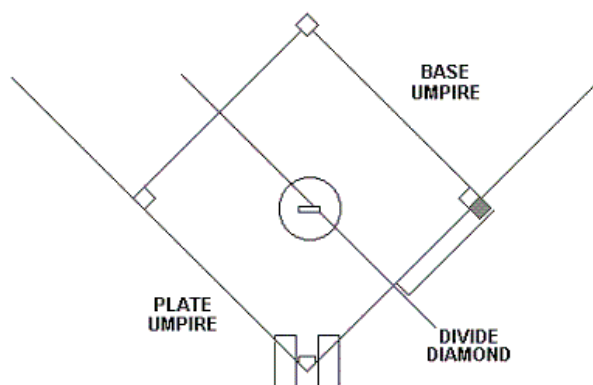
- 1 The ball**
- 2 The defensive player making the play**
- 3 The batter runner or runner and**
- 4 The base or area where the above elements meet**

### **Three Basic Principles**

There are three basic principles that apply to the Two Umpire Rotation System; the division principle, the infield/outfield principle and the leading runner principle.

#### **1 The Division Principle**

The home Plate Umpire takes all calls at Home Plate and third base and the Base Umpire takes all calls at first and second bases.



#### **Exceptions**

- 1** When the Batter Runner goes to third base, the Base Umpire then takes Batter Runner to third
- 2** On an Infield play, the Base Umpire takes the first call on a base, even if it is at third base
- 3** When a Runner steals to third base, the Base Umpire takes the call
- 4** If you must deviate, communicate your deviation to your partner

## 2 The Infield/Outfield Principle

When the ball is in the infield, the Base Umpire moves or stays in the outfield.

When the ball is in the outfield, the Base Umpire moves to a position in the infield.

## 3 The Leading Runner Principle

The base umpire should start in a position that is up with the lead runner. The expectation is that, on a pick-off play, (a play where the catcher attempts to put out a Runner leading off from a base on the pitch) the catcher will play the lead runner and therefore the base umpire needs to be in a position to make this call.





**Note:** It is the responsibility of **both umpires** to ensure **all** bases are covered in Tag-Up (re-touching the base after a fly ball is first touched on a catch) situations.





All umpires must watch for, Tags, Obstruction, Interferences, Touched Bases, Runners passing each other, Blocked Balls, etc.

Prior to the pitch the umpire should stand relaxed. He should be focused on the pitch and the batter, be ready and mobile for a possible play. During a call it is important to be still and focused on the play in front of you.

### Conventions

The conventions used to describe the situations in this manual are:

1. The plate umpire is referred to as 'Plate' or 'P' and the base umpire is 'Base' or 'B'.
2. Runners at 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are indicated with 'R'
3. 1<sup>st</sup> movement of the umpire's is   
 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement of the umpire's is   
 1<sup>st</sup> Movement of the ball is   
 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement of the ball   
 (indicating all potential secondary plays available to the fielders)
4. Icons used in this manual:

			
Plate Umpire	Base Umpire	Runner	Fielder

### Plate Umpire Starting Position

In all cases, the plate umpire's starting position and actions are as follows:

- Sweeps the home plate and checks that the field is clear and ready for play.
- Should take up a position behind the catcher.
- After each pitch, you should call Ball or Strike, give signals as required and then relax, while maintaining good general awareness.
- Responsible for calling:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul Balls
  - Batting infractions

- On every hit exit from behind the catcher via the left (even on a left handed batter) and rotate to your position.
- If the ball is close to the foul line, move to the line and straddle the line to make the fair/foul call.
- On infield hits, with no runners, trail the batter runner 1/3 of the way to 1<sup>st</sup> base; with runner on 1st base only, trail runner ¼ way to home plate then move to foul territory on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side for possible call on R1 at 3<sup>rd</sup> base; and with runners on second or third base, stay in foul territory and watch batter runner to 1<sup>st</sup> base

Movements are always dictated by the principle of keeping the four elements in front of the umpire.

### **Base Umpire Ready Position**

The Base Umpire should assume a ready position by:

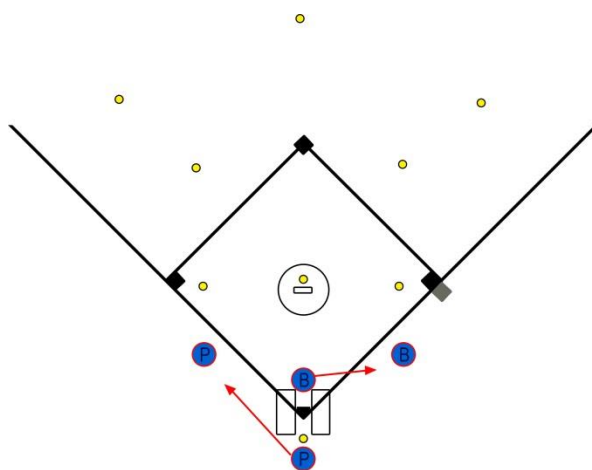
- Facing SQUARE TO THE BATTER prior to the pitch, always being able to see both the pitcher and the home plate area.
- As the pitcher assumes the set position (hands together), the umpire should place his feet a comfortable distance apart (at least shoulder width), stay relaxed but still.
- As the pitcher releases the pitch adopt the 'ready' position by unlocking the knees slightly, with your weight resting lightly on the balls of the feet and the hands drawn in, close to the belt line in front of the body.
- Remain in this position until the catcher catches the ball or the ball is hit.

Once the ball is hit or thrown, the umpire pushes off on the balls of his feet and moves to position for a potential play.

### **Base Umpire Position for Calls**

Prior to the pitch the base umpire should stand relaxed. With no runners on, the starting position is 5-6 meters (18 feet) behind 1<sup>st</sup> base in foul territory, 150 mm (6 inches) off the line. With runners on the starting position is 4 meters (15 feet) behind the base line. On force plays call from 5 – 6 meters (18 feet). On tag plays move to 3 meters (10-12 feet) to see and make the call. At the start of the pitch be focused on the pitch and the batter, be ready and mobile for a possible play. During a call it is important to be still and keep the four elements in front of you, i.e. ball, base, defensive player and offensive player.

## Between Inning Position



### Starting position

#### Plate Umpire

- After the Plate meeting, stand in a position just off the third base line in Foul Territory approximately one third of the way to third base
- Hustle the teams on and off the field
- Stand facing the diamond with your hands relaxed at your sides
- Observe the Warm-Up Pitches (five allowed for each pitcher in the first innings and with each new pitcher. Then three warm up pitches are allowed at the start of each half innings)
- Let the Catcher know when the second to last Warm-Up Pitch has been thrown, then say 'one more Catcher'
- Replenish extra ball supply
- Sweep the home plate and then assume a position behind the Catcher after the Warm-Up Pitches

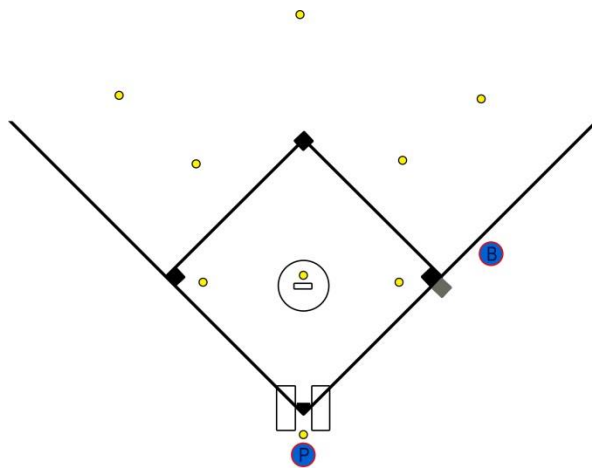
During the first half inning and when there is a change of pitchers, you may wish to put on the mask and observe the Warm-Ups after making the line-up changes and announcing them to the Official Scorer

#### Base Umpire

- After the plate meeting, stand in a position just off the first base line in Foul Territory approximately one third of the way to first base
- Hustle the teams on and off the field.
- Stand facing the diamond with your hands relaxed at your sides.
- After the warm-up pitches in the top half of the 1st inning clean the pitching plate and then hustle to your preliminary starting position. Clean pitcher plate after the last out in the half inning thereafter.



## No Runners on Base



### Starting position

#### Plate Umpire

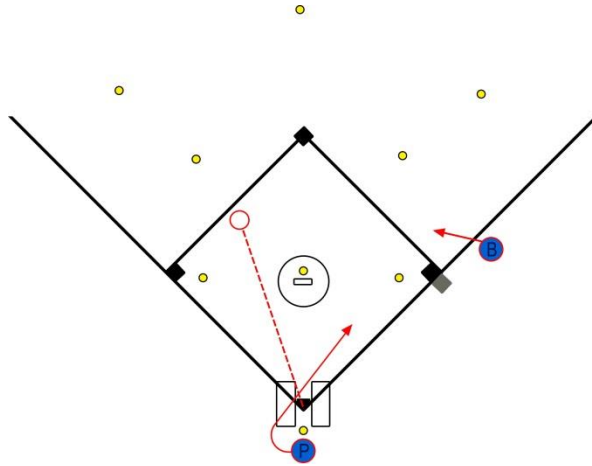
- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions

#### Base Umpire

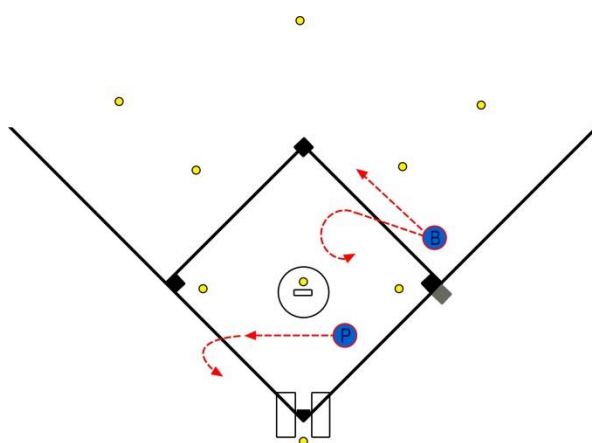
- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position 5-6 meters (18 feet) behind 1<sup>st</sup> base in foul territory, 150 mm (6 inches) off the line
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches

## No Runners on Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and hustle out in front of the home plate and trail the Batter Runner toward first base (in Fair Territory)
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Stop...let the ball turn you into the play
- Responsible for:
  - Three Foot Line Interference
  - An Overthrow out of play
  - Tag plays ½ way to 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- Be prepared to assist your partner
- Watch the Batter Runner/Runner touch the base(s)

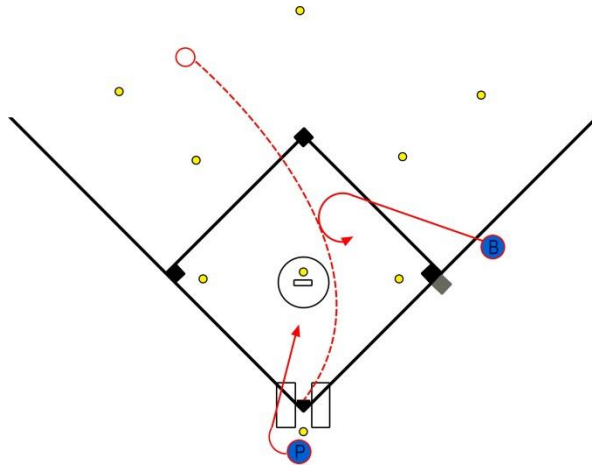
#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Take two or three steps into Fair Territory
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop.... Wait... Call and Signal
- In case of Overthrow, cut into the Infield and prepare to go to second and third base
- Makes all calls on the first throw on all base plays
- Watch the Batter Runner/ Runner touch base(s)

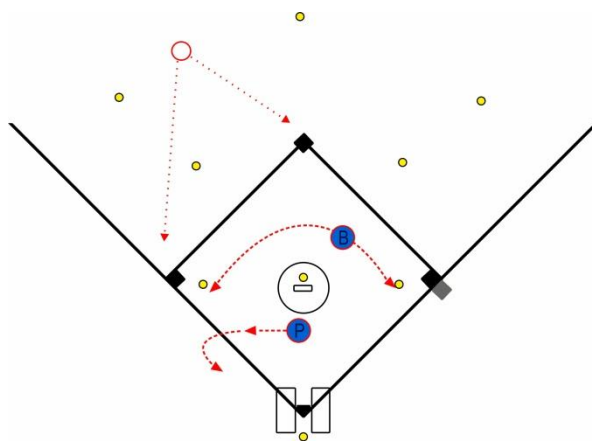
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## No Runners on Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit to the Outfield

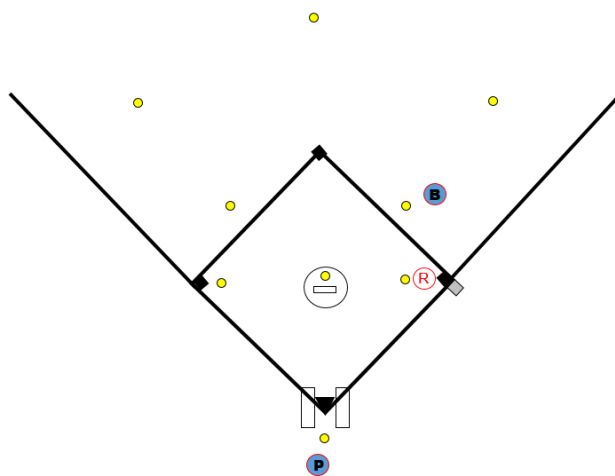
#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and hustle out in front of the plate toward the flight of the ball
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Straddle line on hits near Foul line
- Judge Catch/No Catch
- Watch the Batter Runner/Runner touch base(s)
- On an Overthrow out of play: call/Signal 'Dead Ball', award bases to the runner(s)

#### Base Umpire

- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Take the Batter Runner into first, second and third base
- Watch the Batter Runner/Runner touch base(s)

## Runner at First Base



### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

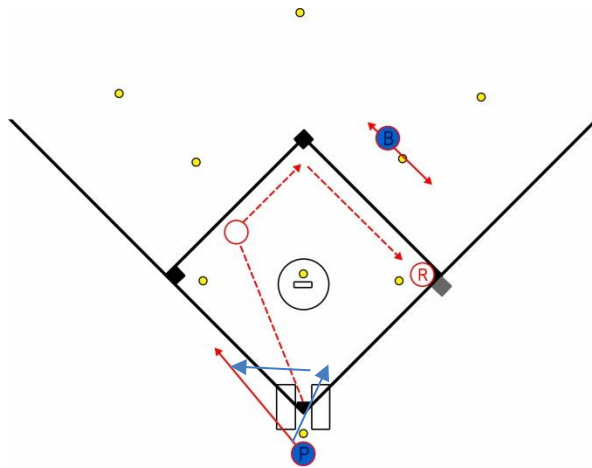
- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions

#### Base Umpire

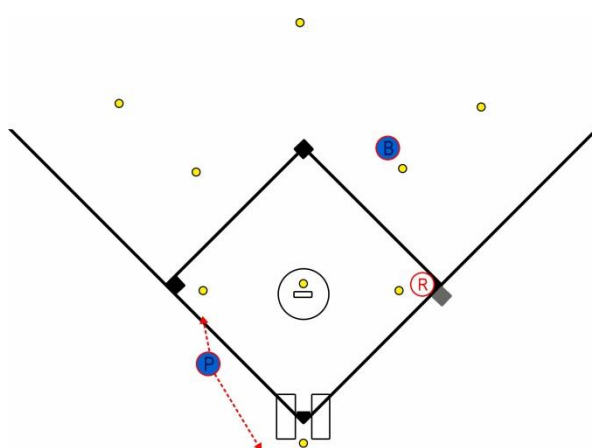
- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position behind and off of the 2<sup>nd</sup> base person, shading toward the runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runner and home plate area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for lead-off calls

## Runner at First Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and hustle out in front of the home plate and trail the Batter Runner toward first base (in Fair Territory) if a play is possible at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Responsible for:
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Three Foot Line Interference
- Move into Foul Territory and be prepared to take R1 into third base and home
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made.
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

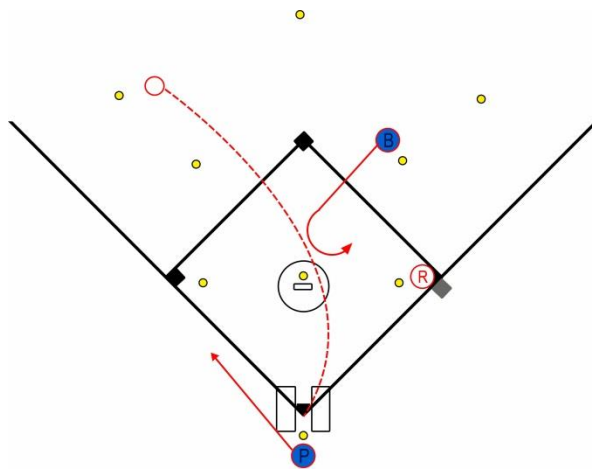
#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Anticipate a Double Play
- Move quickly toward the base where the first play is to be made
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Call all plays made on the first throw



## Runner at First Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement

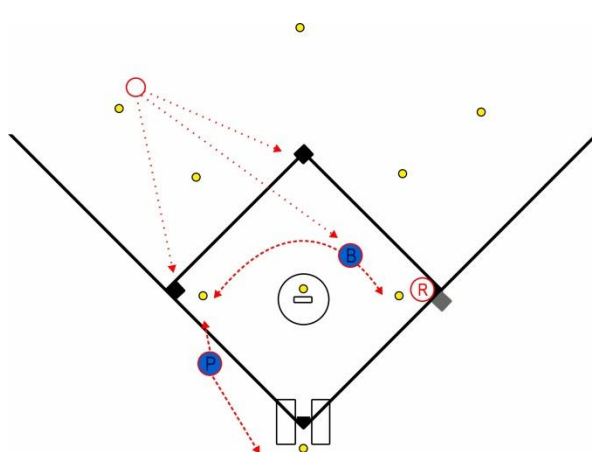


### Ball Hit to the Outfield

#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch or No Catch
- Responsible for:
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Fair/Foul
- Move into Foul Territory and be prepared to take R1 into third base and home
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

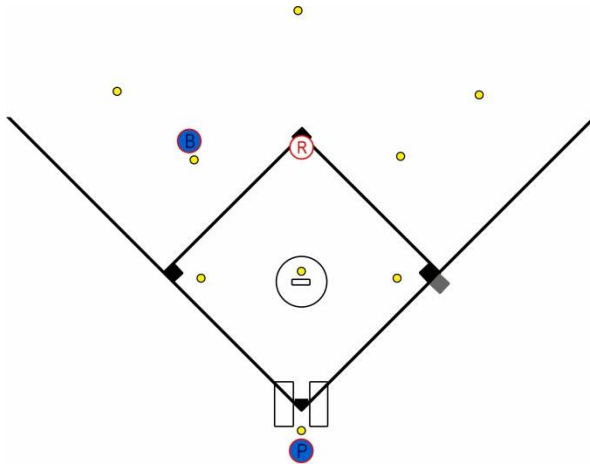
### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Take the tag-up at first base
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)
- Take the Batter Runner into first, second and third base

## Runner at Second Base



### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

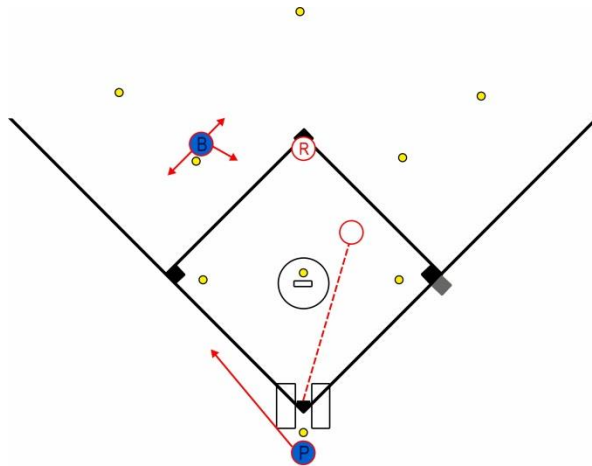
- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions

#### Base Umpire

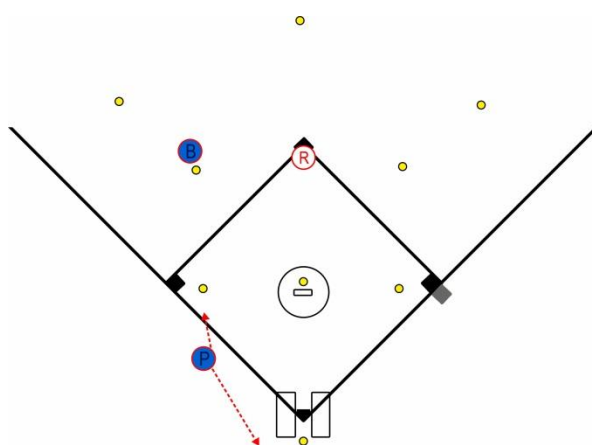
- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position behind and off of the shortstop shading toward the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runner and home plate area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for all Lead Off calls

## Runner at Second Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

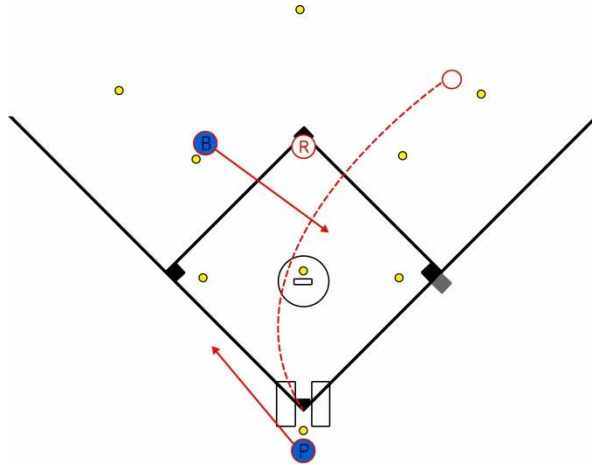
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory toward third base
- Watch possible action at first base (ie Obstruction, spiking, Three Foot Line Interference, etc)
- Responsible for:
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Three Foot Line Interference
- Move toward third base
- Move into Foul Territory and prepare for a play at third base or home plate
- On an Overthrow out of play: call/Signal 'Dead Ball', award bases to the runner(s)
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

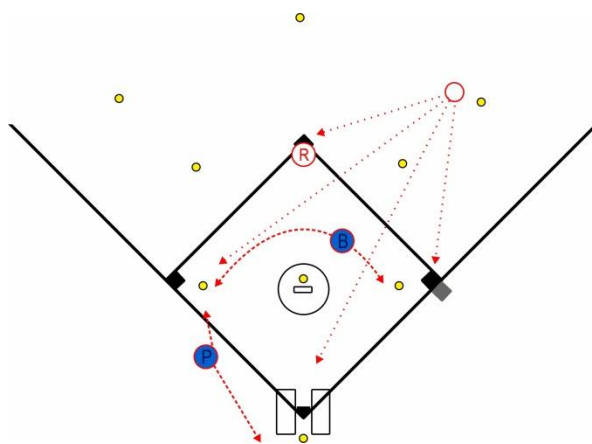
- Watch the ball
- See where the play will be made
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Call all plays made on the first throw
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runner at Second Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit to the Outfield

#### Plate Umpire

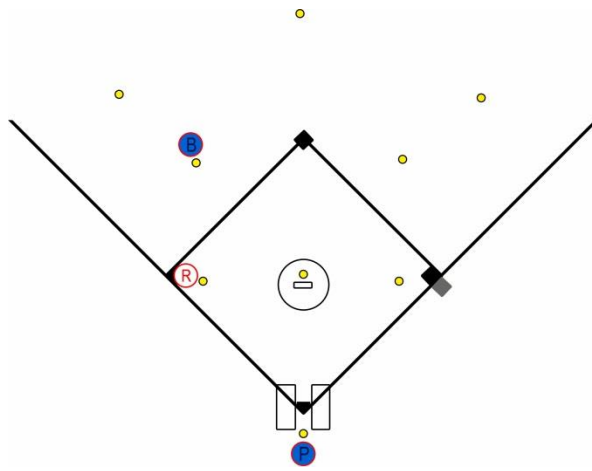
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Make position to Judge Catch or No Catch
- Move into Foul Territory and prepare for a play at home or move toward third base and prepare for a play at third
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Make position to watch the tag up of Runner at second base
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)
- Take the Batter Runner into first, second and third base
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal

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## Runner at Third Base



### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

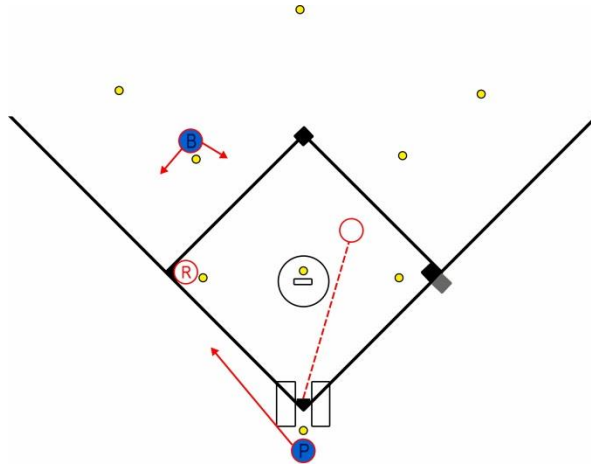
- Take a position in the slot and behind the Catcher as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions

#### Base Umpire

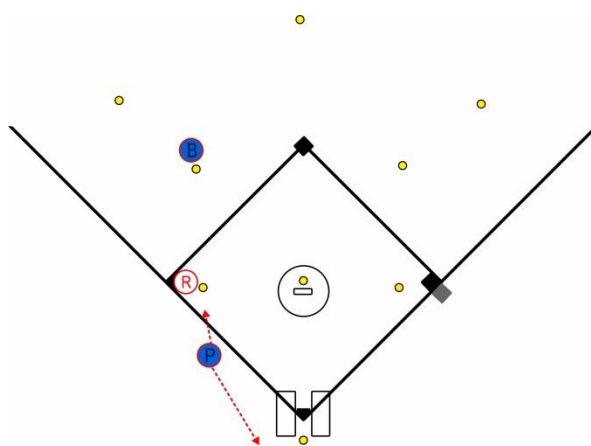
- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position off of and behind the shortstop shading toward the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runner and home plate area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for all Lead Off calls

## Runner at Third Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

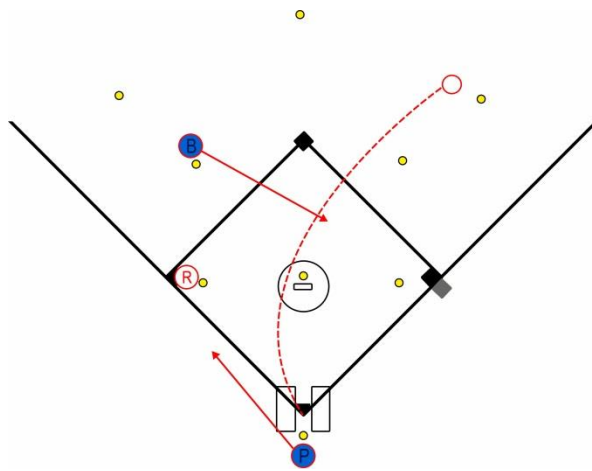
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- See where the play occurs
- Responsible for:
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Three Foot Line Interference
- Anticipate a play at third base or home plate
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

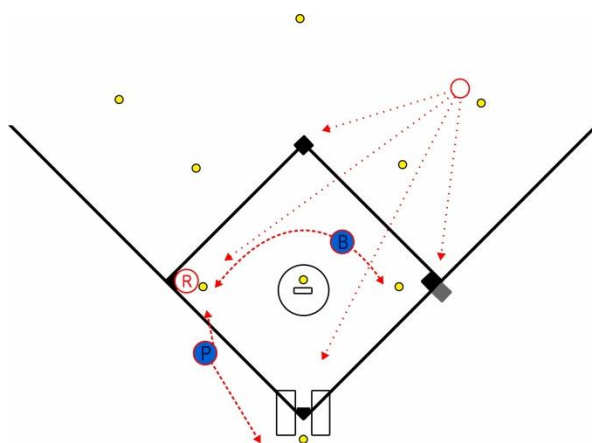
- Watch the ball
- See where the play will be made
- Avoid a thrown ball
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Call the first play made in the infield except for a runner going home
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runner at Third Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit to the Outfield

#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory towards third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Make position to judge Fair/Foul, Catch/No Catch
- Take the tag-up at third base
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made (third base or home)
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Take the Batter Runner into first, second and third base
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)



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## Runners at First & Second

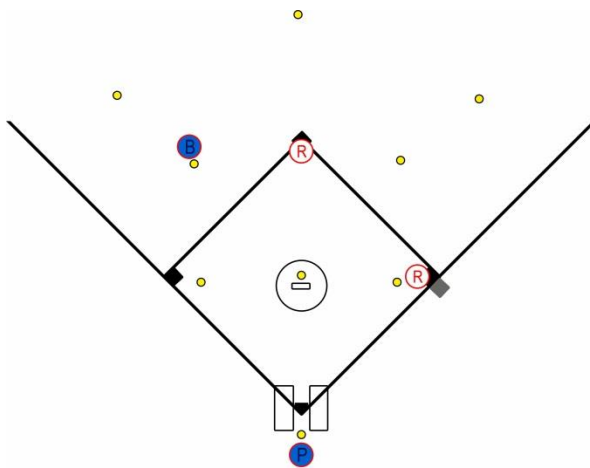
### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions
  - Infield Fly (if less than two out)

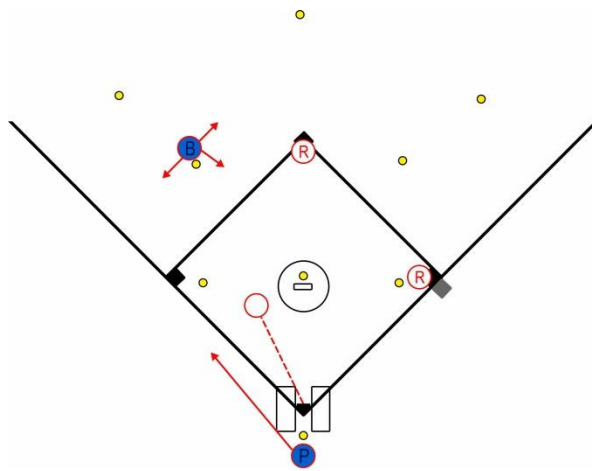
#### Base Umpire

- Face in the direction of home plate with the shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position off of and behind the shortstop shading towards the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runners and home plate area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for all Lead Off calls

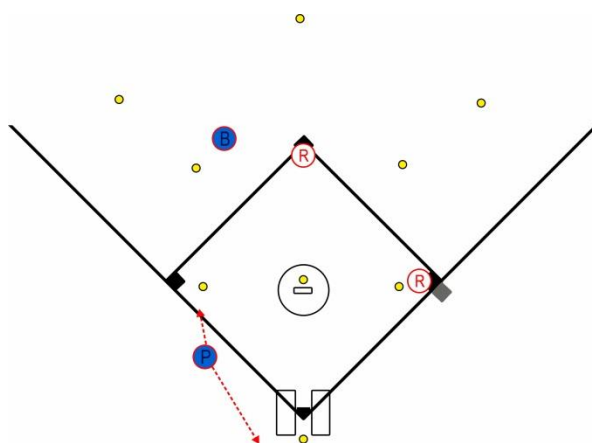


## Runners at First & Second

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

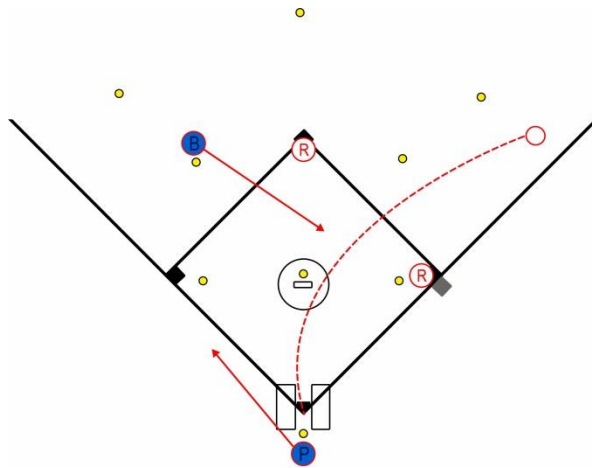
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Responsibility to judge Fair/Foul, Catch/No Catch
- Hesitate to see where the play occurs
- Responsible for:
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Three Foot Line Interference
- After the first play on the Infield, responsible for succeeding plays at third base or home plate
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

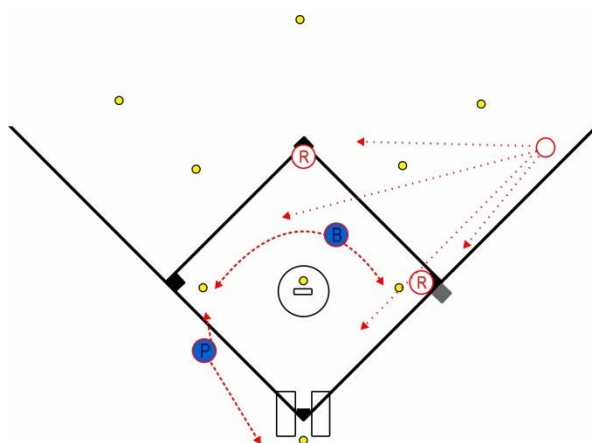
- Watch the ball
- See where the play will be made
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Call all plays made on the first throw of the ball on the bases
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runners at First & Second Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Hit to the Outfield

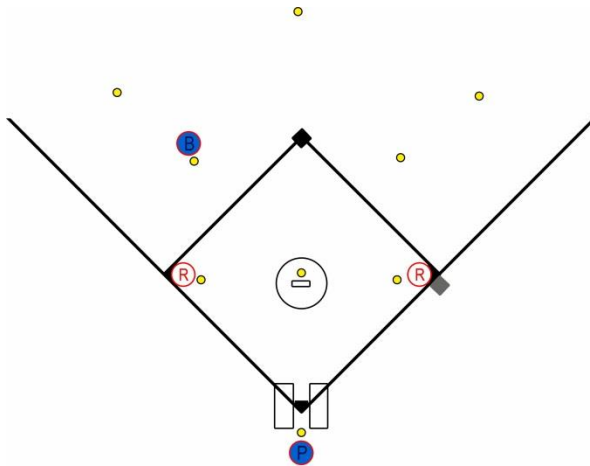
#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and move in Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Make position to judge Fair/Foul, Catch/No Catch
- Anticipate a play at third or home plate
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)
- Assist your partner

#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Take the tag-ups at first and second base
- Take R1 into second and the BR into first, second and third base
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runners at First & Third Base



### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

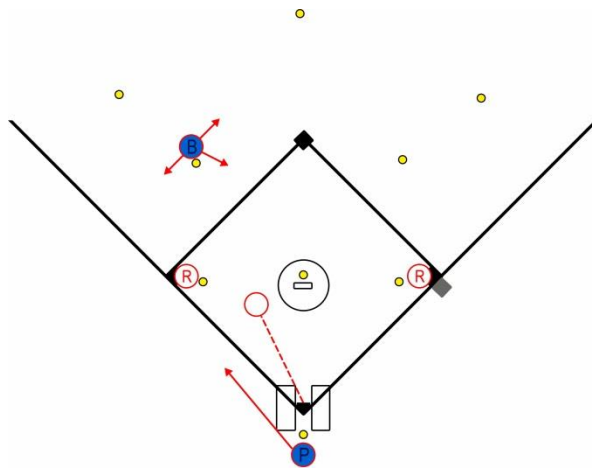
- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions

#### Base Umpire

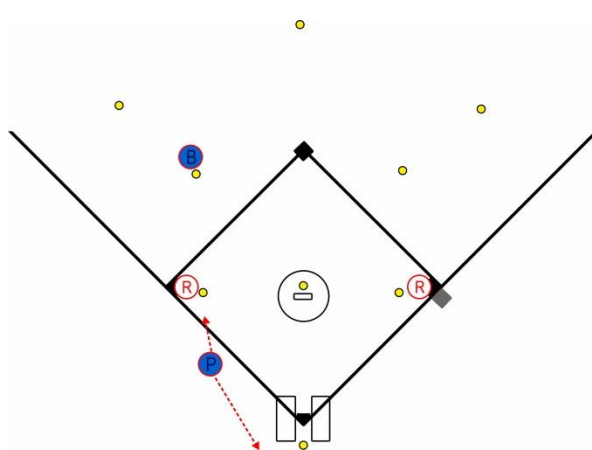
- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position off of and behind the shortstop shading towards the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runners and home plate area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for all Lead Off calls

## Runners at First & Third Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

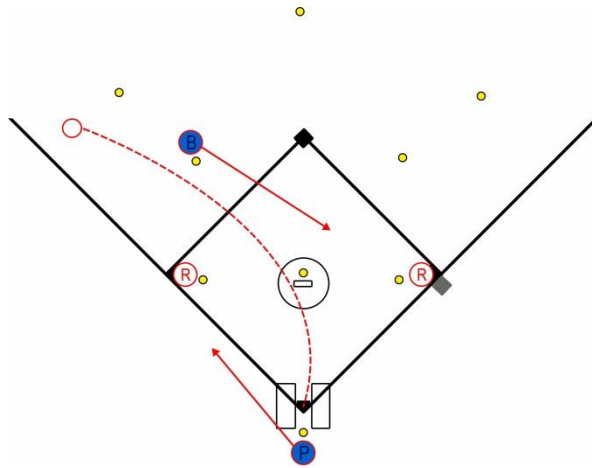
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move into Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Responsible for:
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Three Foot Line Interference
- Hesitate to see where the play occurs
- After the first play on the Infield, responsible for succeeding plays at third base or home plate
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

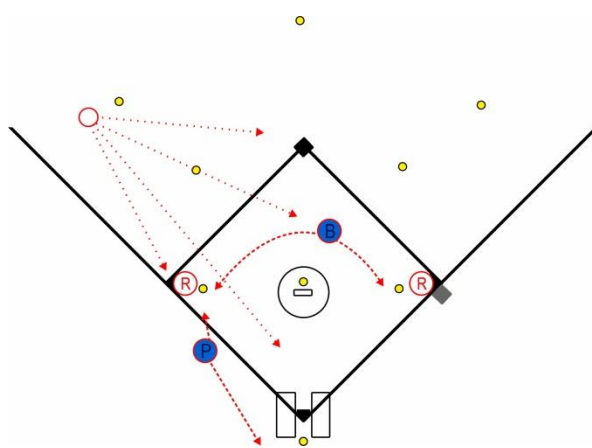
- Watch the ball
- Wait to see where the play will be made
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Call all plays made on the first throw
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runners at First & Third Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball hit to the Outfield

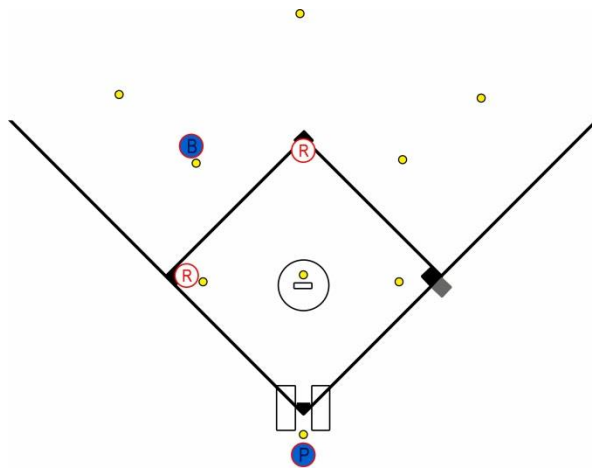
#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and move into Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch or No Catch
- Move to the holding position to watch the tag-up at third base
- Anticipate a play at third or home plate
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Watch the touches and tag-ups at first and second base
- Take R1 into second and the BR into first, second and third base
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runners at Second & Third Base



### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions

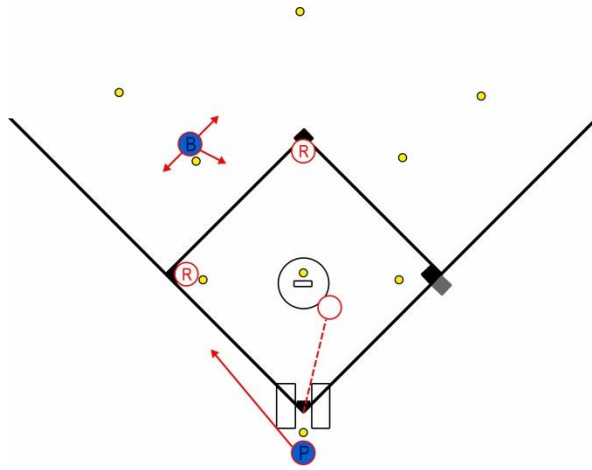
#### Base Umpire

- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position off of and behind the shortstop (shading towards the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runners and the home area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for all Lead Off calls

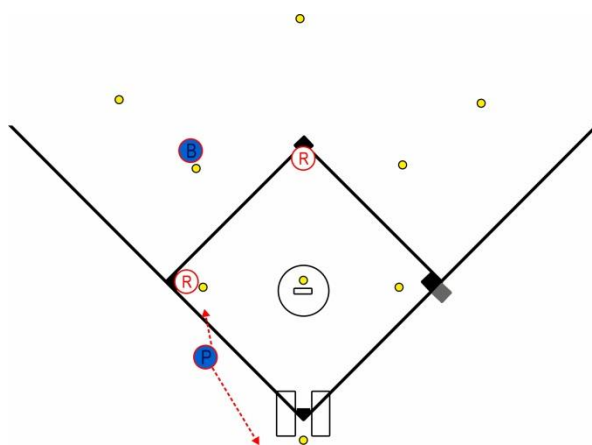


## Runners at Second & Third Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit in the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

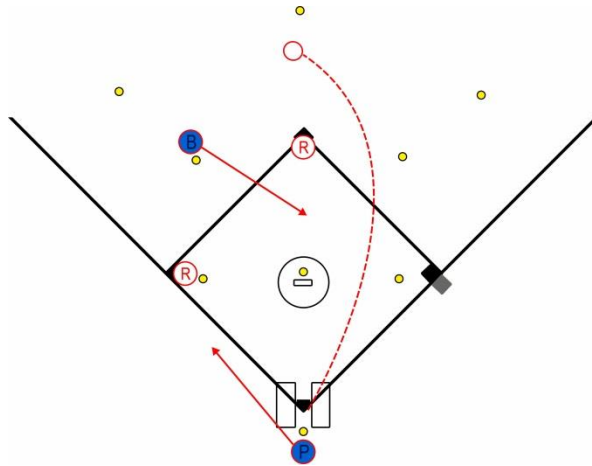
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move into Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions
- Move quickly toward the base where they play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

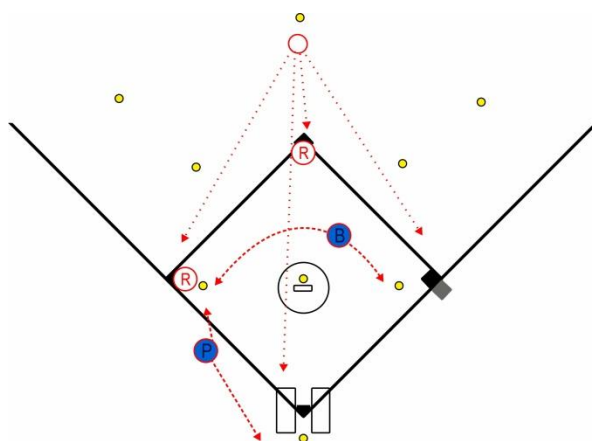
- Watch the ball
- Wait to see where the play will be made
- Avoid a thrown ball.
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made.
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Runners at Second & Third Base

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit to the Outfield

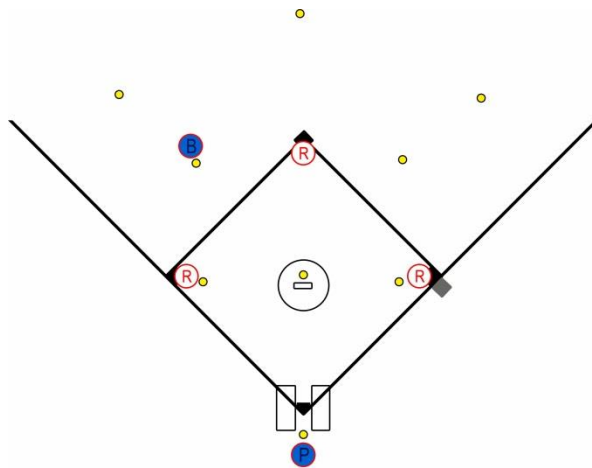
#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and move into Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch or No Catch
- Watch the tag-up at third base
- Anticipate a play at third or home plate
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Watch the touches and tag-ups at first and second base
- Take R1 into second and the BR into first, second and third base
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Bases Loaded



### Starting Position

#### Plate Umpire

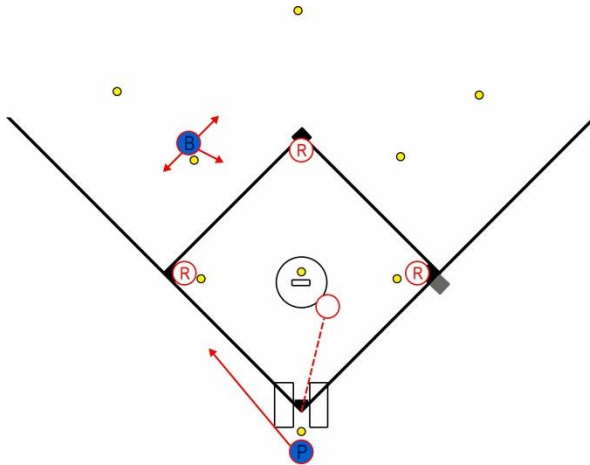
- Take a position in the slot as described in The Plate Umpire Mechanics
- Responsible for:
  - Illegal Pitches
  - Fair/Foul balls
  - Batting infractions
  - Infield Fly (if less than two out)

#### Base Umpire

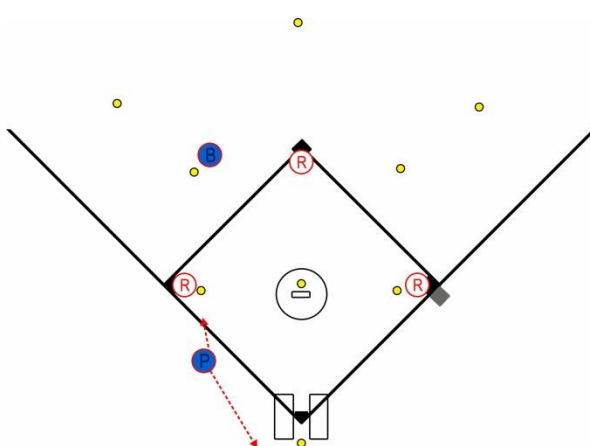
- Face in the direction of home plate with shoulders square to home plate
- Take a position off of and behind the shortstop shading towards the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base ensuring a view of the pitcher, runners and home plate area.
- Go into the 'ready position' when the pitcher starts pitching motion
- Share responsibility for calling Illegal Pitches
- Responsible for all Lead Off calls

## Bases Loaded

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball Hit to the Infield

#### Plate Umpire

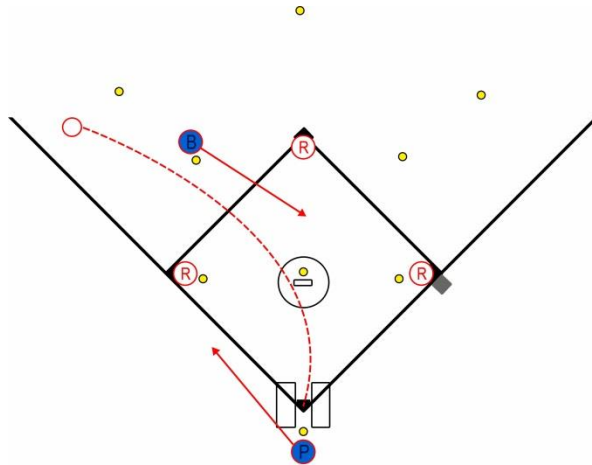
- Exit to the left of the catcher and move into Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- You are responsible for:
  - Judging Fair or Foul
  - Overthrow out of play
  - Three-foot line Interference
- Anticipate a play at home plate
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Note: A play at any base is a force play
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

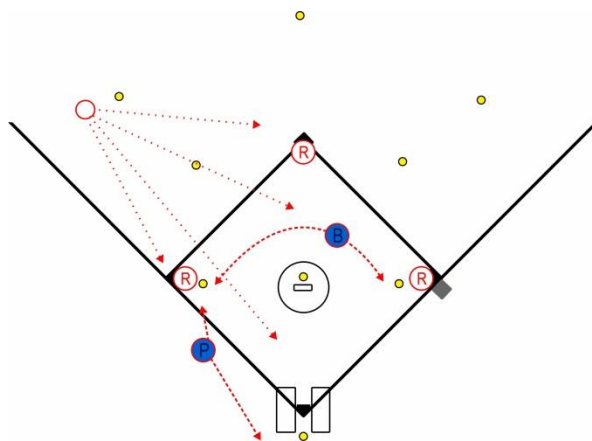
- Watch the ball
- Wait to see where the play will be made
- Move quickly to the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Call all plays made on the first throw of the ball on the bases
- Avoid a thrown ball and Runners
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

## Bases Loaded

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement



### Ball hit to the Outfield

#### Plate Umpire

- Exit to the left of the catcher and move into Foul Territory toward third base
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Judge Catch or No Catch
- Wait to watch the tag-up at third base
- Anticipate a play at third or home plate
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

#### Base Umpire

- Watch the ball
- Move quickly into the Infield and keep the play in front of you
- Watch the touches and tag-ups at first and second base
- Take R1 into second and the BR into first, second and third base
- Move quickly toward the base where the play is made
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Stop... Wait... Call and Signal
- Watch the Runner(s) touch base(s)

