

Introduction to Umpiring

What We'll Cover

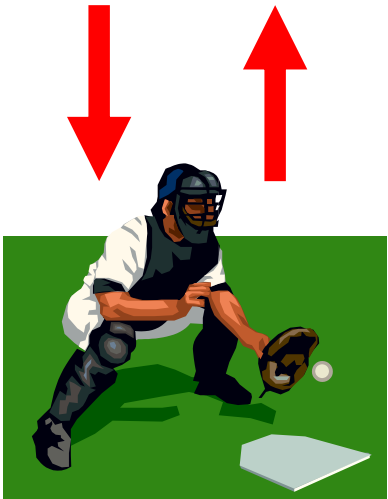
- Little League rules
 - Not ALL of them (you need to study yourself)
- Other important tidbits to make you a better volunteer umpire
- Disclaimer: We won't make you perfect
That's up to you!

Regulations

Reg VI: Pitching and Catching (Baseball)



- Pitcher delivers 41+ pitches, he/she is not eligible to catch
 - Restriction is for the whole day, even for double headers
 - Applies at all levels
- Catcher catches any part of four innings in a game, he/she is not eligible to pitch rest of that day



NOTE: Under no circumstances shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

So, What's a Pitch?

- **2.00 Definition:** A ball delivered by the pitcher to a batter
- **Illegal Pitch** (even if a pitch wasn't delivered)
- **Balk** (except on pickoff or pitch not thrown)
- **Anything else is NOT a pitch!**
 - Warm-up pitches in the bullpen
 - Warm-up pitches between innings
 - Pitches declared “No Pitch”
 - Throws to make plays/appeals
 - “Ball” penalty to the batter without a delivered pitch
 - Pitcher licks fingers, delays more than 20 sec, etc.



Reg XIV: Field Decorum

- Only players, manager and 2 rostered coaches allowed on the field
- All game participants must stay in the dugouts/bullpens
- **One adult in dugout at all times**
- No alcohol, tobacco, e-cigs or controlled substances anywhere



Rule 1.00
Objectives of the
Game

Rule 1.10: LL Bats

- Baseball bats in baseball, softball bats in softball



- Little League (Majors) and below, Intermediate, and Junior League divisions of Baseball
 - All non-wood and laminated bats shall bear the USA Baseball logo signifying that the bat meets the USA Baseball's Youth Bat Performance Standard.
 - All BPF – 1.15 bats will be prohibited beginning with the 2018 season.
 - Additionally, starting in 2018, the bat diameter shall not exceed 2-5/8 inches for these divisions of play.
 - *Intermediate/Juniors can also use BBCOR.*

Required markings MUST BE READABLE on bat

Rule 1.10: LL Bats

- **Senior Baseball**

- All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the BBCOR standard and no more than “-3” drop

- **All levels of Baseball and Softball**

- The use of pine tar or any other similar adhesive substance is prohibited at all levels. Use of these substances will result in the bat being declared illegal and removed from play.

Rule 1.11: The Uniform

- What's **not** allowed:



- Metal cleats
- Long white or gray sleeves on pitchers (Baseball)
- Arm/wrist bands on pitchers
 - Neoprene sleeves must be covered (Baseball)
- Frayed/ragged sleeves
- Metal or glass ANYTHING
- Jewelry (including rubber bracelets)
 - Except medical alert stuff
- Casts on field (**even adult base coaches and umpires**)

Rule 1.16: Batting Helmets

- Minimum of six (seven in JRs/SRs)
- Required for all batters, base runners, players/non-adult base coaches, and bat retrievers
- Must be NOCSAE certified
- Chin straps, face guards are optional
 - May be required by League Local Rules
- No cracks or unauthorized paint/decals



Rule 1.17: Catcher's Gear

- Required: Chest protector, helmet/mask, and shin guards, catcher's mitt, cup (ALL players - not just catchers)
- Helmet/mask must:
 - Be NOCSAE certified
 - Have throat guard (even on hockey-style mask)
 - Not have cracks or unauthorized paint/decals
- Helmet/mask is required for:
 - Player warming up pitcher between innings
 - Player warming up pitcher in the bullpen
 - Catcher during pre-game warm-up
 - **Infield AND Outfield**



Correct any violations!

Rule 2.00
Definition of Terms

Rule 2.00: Def of Catch

- What is a Catch?
 - **Secure possession** of ball in hand or glove
 - Fielder must show **complete control**
 - Release must be **voluntary and intentional**



Rule 2.00: Def of Fair/Fair Territory

- Foul lines, bases and plate are all in fair territory
- Bounding ball that travels past 1B/3B while in fair territory
- Bounding ball that travels over any part of the 1B/3B bag
- Untouched ball in flight that lands in fair territory at or beyond 1B/3B
- Ball first touched in fair territory, regardless of fielder's position



Rule 2.00: Def of Foul/Foul Territory

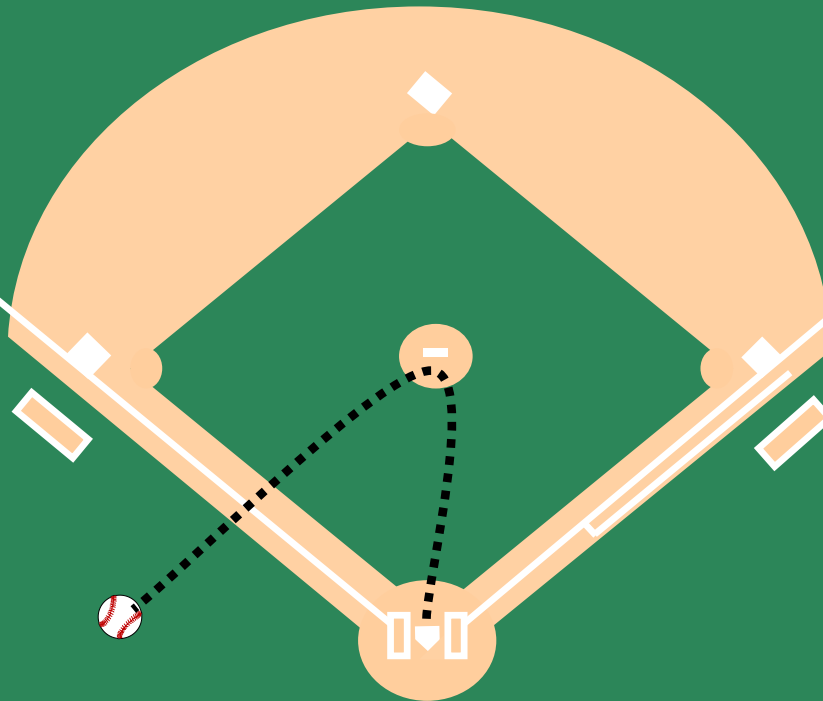
- Bounding ball that travels past 1B or 3B while in foul territory
- Untouched ball in flight that lands in foul territory
- Ball first touched in foul territory, regardless of person's position
- Ball which touches anything "foreign to natural ground" in foul territory before 1B/3B
- Batted ball that hits batter while in the box



Fair or Foul?

This ball did not settle on fair territory between home and first or home and third, or pass first or third base while bounding to the outfield.

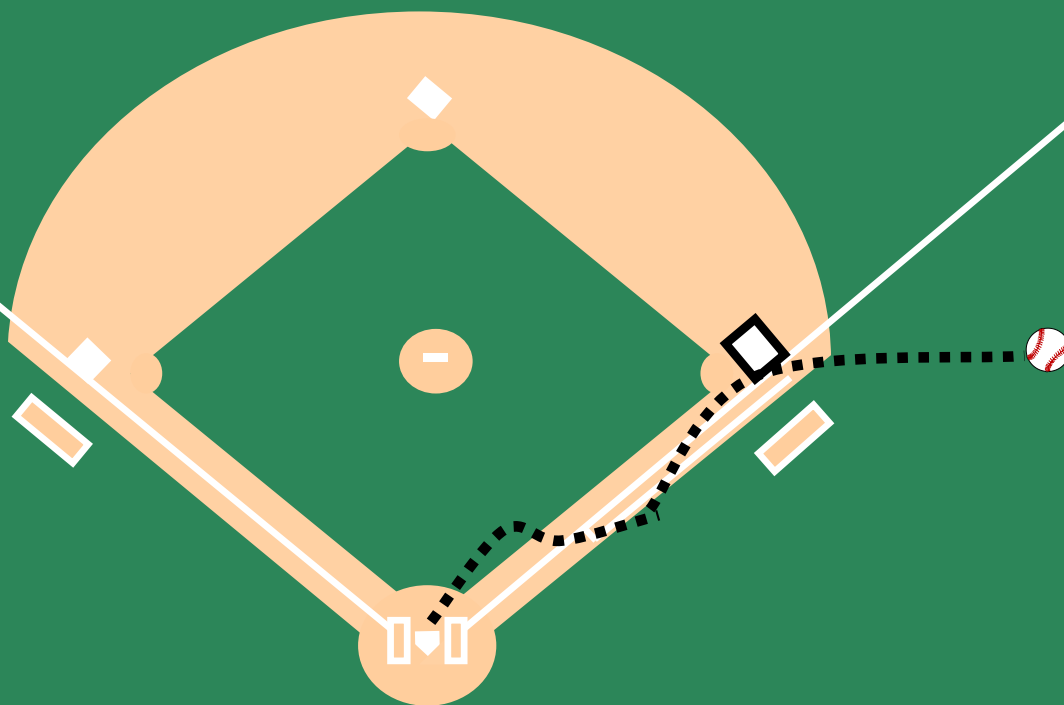
Therefore, this is a **Foul Ball**.



Fair or Foul?

This ball was bounding to the outfield and went over first base. The ball needs only to pass over any part of the base to be a fair ball.

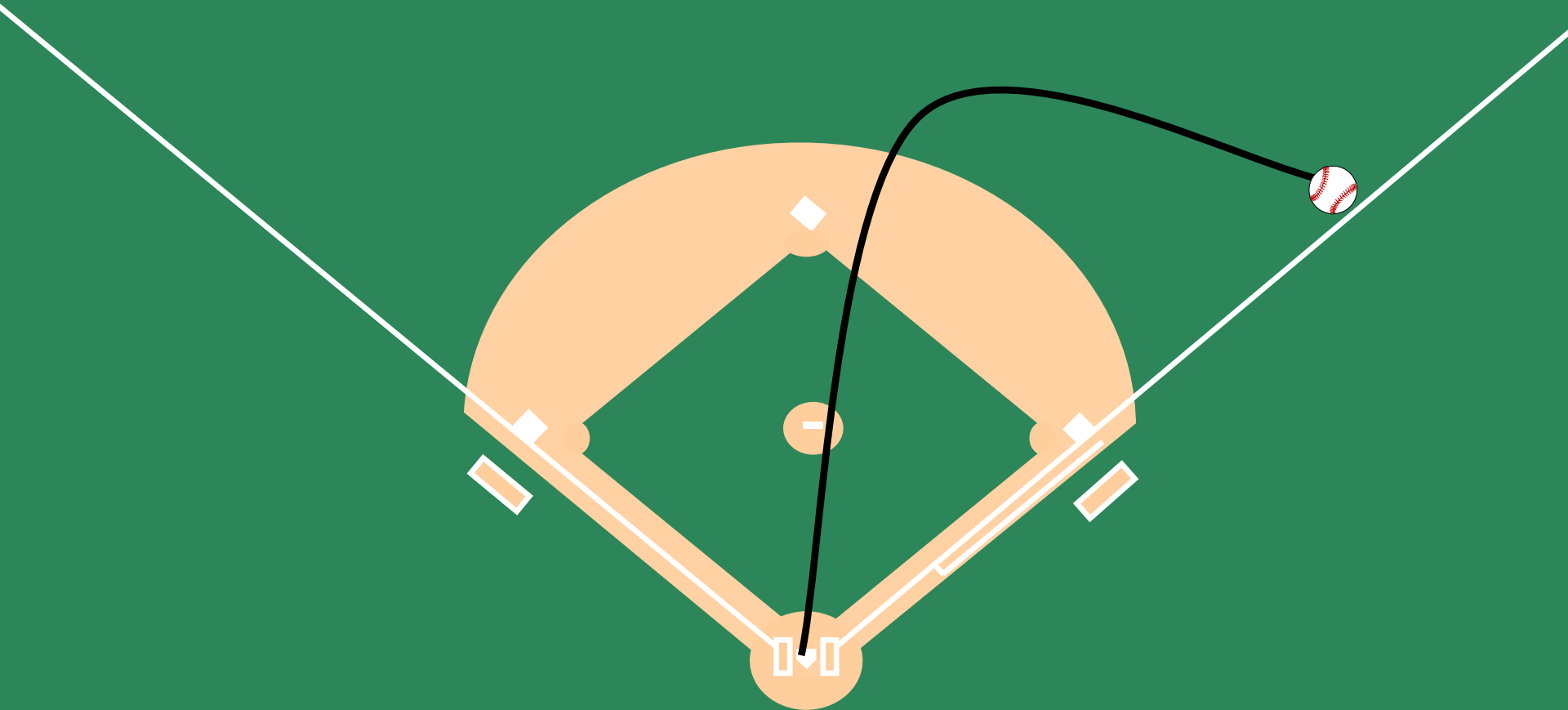
Therefore, this is a Fair Ball.



Fair or Foul?

This ball fell first on fair territory, beyond first base.

Therefore, this is a Fair Ball.

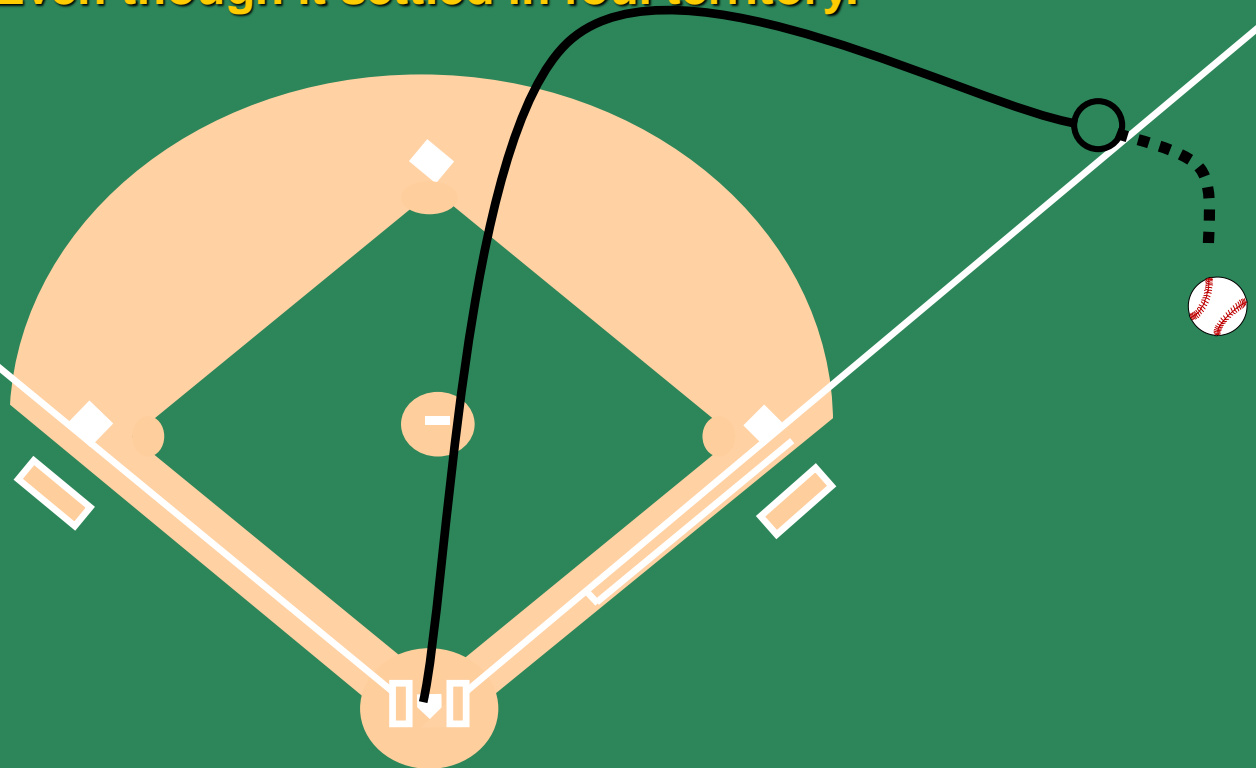


Fair or Foul?

This ball fell first on fair territory, beyond first base.

Therefore, this is a Fair Ball.

Even though it settled in foul territory.

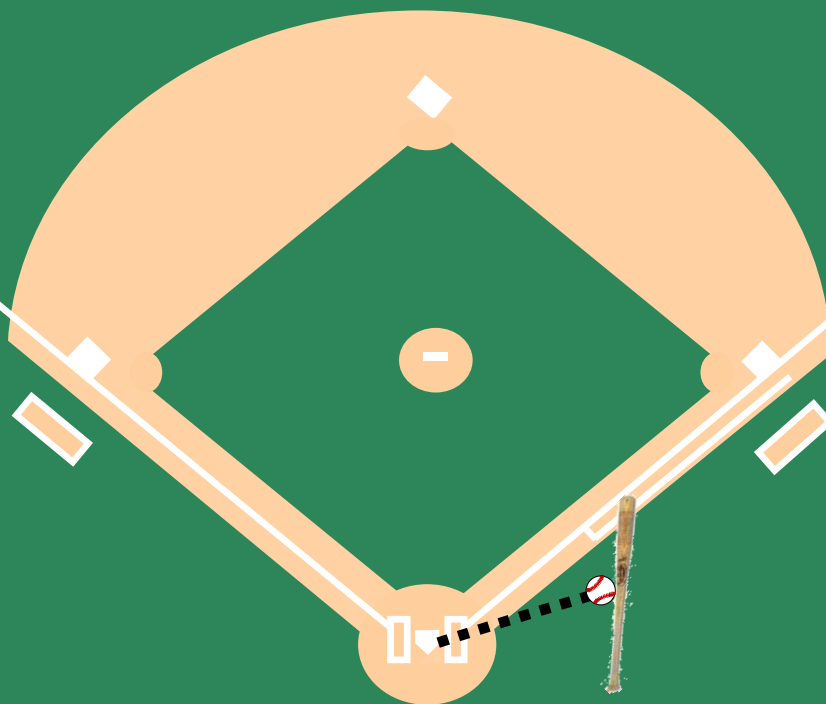


Fair or Foul?

This ball hit a foreign object.

Remember, foreign objects can only be in foul territory.

Therefore, this is a Foul Ball.

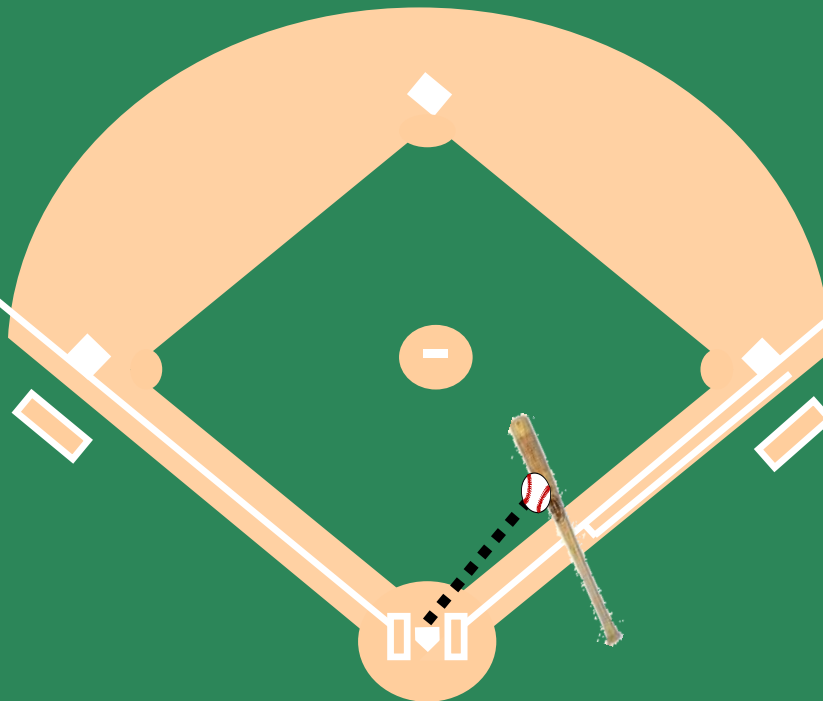


Fair or Foul?

This ball hit an object in fair territory.

Remember, foreign objects can only be in foul territory.

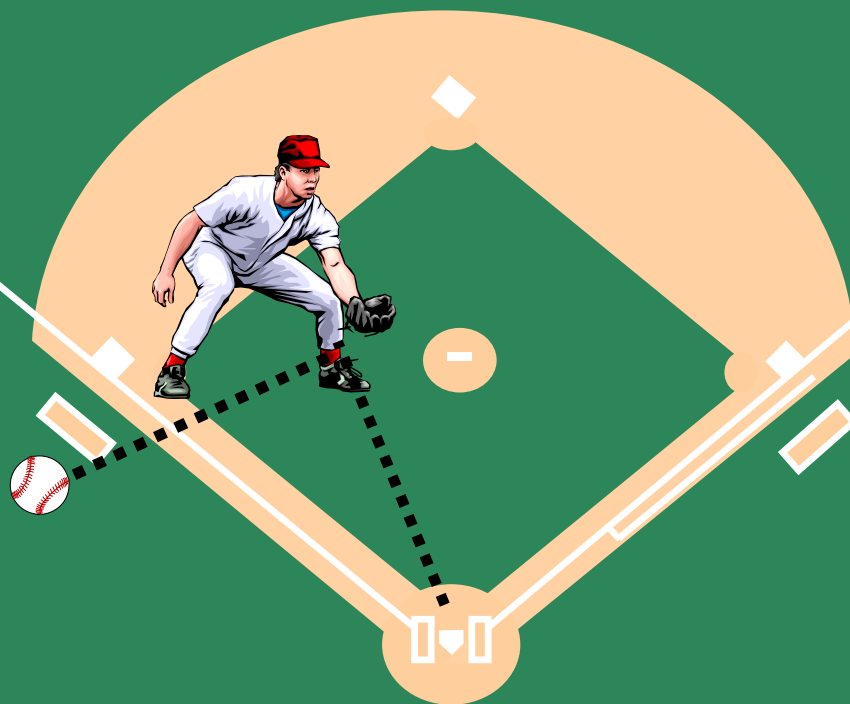
Therefore, this is a fair ball.



Fair or Foul?

This ball touches the person of an umpire or player in fair territory.

Therefore, this is a fair ball.



Fair or Foul? (The ball was NOT caught - it DROPPED!)



Rule 2.00: Def of Foul Tip



- Batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher's hand or mitt and is legally caught
 - Must hit the hand or mitt first
 - Must be caught by the catcher
 - A short-hop is not a legal catch
- A Foul Tip is a Strike. Ball is Live and in play; runners may run!

Do NOT call "Foul Ball!" or "Foul Tip!"

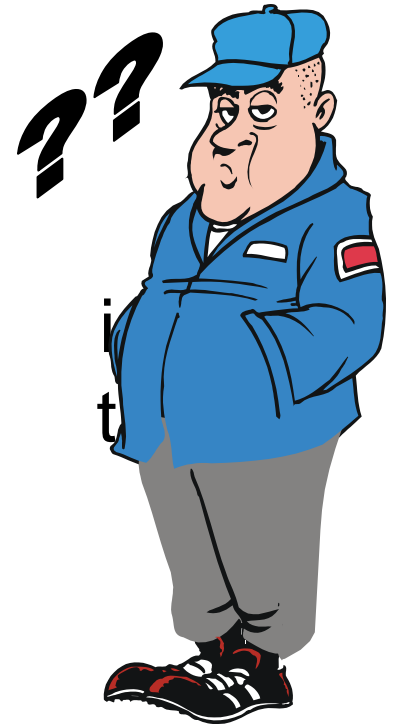
Rule 2.00: Def of Infield Fly

- Rule to prevent defense from getting a “cheap” double play
- Must have the following:
 - Less than two outs
 - Runners on 1st and 2nd, or bases loaded
 - Fair fly ball (not line drive or bunt)
- Ball that could be caught by an infielder using ordinary effort
 - Can be caught by an outfielder



Rule 2.00: Def of Interference

- Interference occurs when someone prevents the defense from making a play
 - Offensive interference
 - Umpire interference
 - Spectator interference
- **Exception:** Defensive interference when a defensive player prevents batter from hitting a pitch



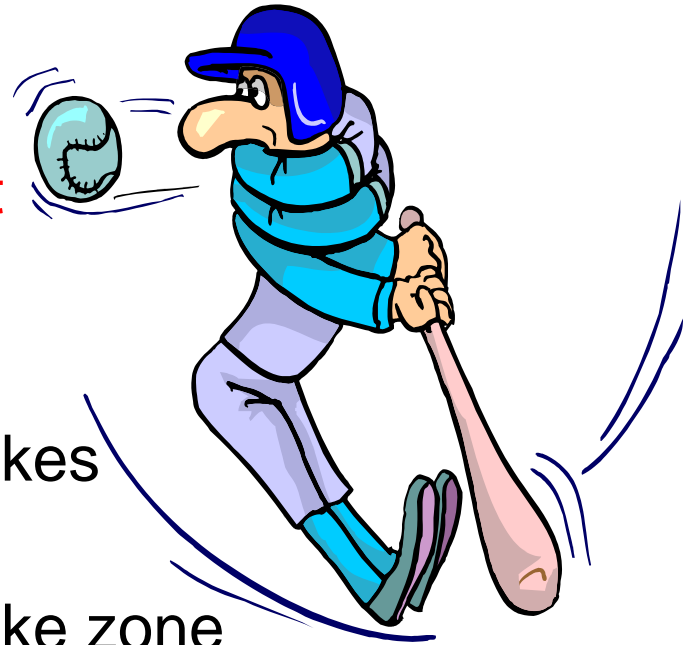
Rule 2.00: Def of Interference

- Umpire interference only happens in two ways
 - Base umpire gets hit by a batted ball before it passes an infielder other than the pitcher
 - Plate umpire prevents a catcher from throwing out a base runner
- Spectator interference
 - Happens when a fan reaches into the field of play and interferes
 - It's NOT interference if ball is beyond field boundaries
 - Could also happen when fan clearly causes a player to react and affect play
 - Ball is immediately dead
 - Umpire awards bases/penalties

Rule 2.00: Def of Strike

- “Live Ball” Strikes

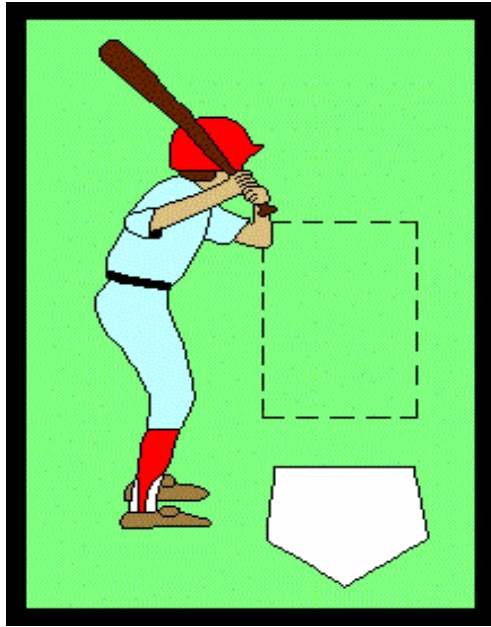
- Ball swung at and missed
- Ball not swung at that passes through the strike zone **in flight**
- Foul tip



- “Dead Ball” Strikes

- Foul ball with less than two strikes
- Foul bunt
- Touches batter while in the strike zone
- Batter swings/attempts to bunt and the ball contacts the batter

Rule 2.00: Def of Strike Zone



- Area over the plate
 - Any part of the ball over any part of the plate
- Top: batter's arm pits
- Bottom: top of batter's knees
- Batter in "natural" stance
 - "Natural" is the position of the batter as he swings the bat
- Zone doesn't change when
 - He ducks or steps out of the box
 - He moves way up or way back in the box

Rule 2.00: Def of Tag

- Tag of person and bag are different!
- A **person** may only be tagged by:
 - Touching him with the ball while holding it
 - Touching him with the glove while the ball is in it
 - Touching him with the hand while the ball is in it
- A **bag** may be tagged with any part of the body while holding the ball in the hand or glove





Live Ball – Dead Ball

- Ball is live when plate umpire puts ball into play
 - Plate umpire calls “Play” when pitcher is on mound ready to pitch
 - Sometimes PU forgets to put ball into play – ball is still live upon the pitch
- Ball becomes dead when
 - Any umpire calls time
 - Hit ball leaves the field in either fair or foul territory
 - Foul ball
 - Home run
 - Ground rule double
 - Thrown ball leaves the field
- No one can be put out when ball is dead
 - Reason why appeal plays need to be done when ball is live.

Rule 3.00
Game Preliminaries

Rule 3.03: Substitutions

- A sub must play 6 consecutive defensive outs and 1 at bat before starter or another sub removes him/her
- When can a manager make a substitution?
 - Defensive: While on defense
 - Offensive: While at bat or on base
- Don't accept substitutions that violate this

Rule 3.03: Substitutes

- A player in the starting line-up who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game, **in the SAME position in the batting order**, provided:
 - (a) his or her substitute has completed one time at bat and;
 - (b) has played defensively for a minimum of six (6) consecutive outs;
- ***A starter and her/his substitute must not be in the line-up at the same time. Once mandatory play is met, starter and substitute can enter/re-enter for each other as desired.***

Rule 3.03: Substitute Pitchers

- **Baseball:** Pitchers once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers
- **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher any time in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.
 - If using CBO, the pitcher must remain on the field to be eligible to return (cannot sit out an inning)
- **NOTE: A player who has met the mandatory play requirements, and is a pitcher at the time she/he is removed, may be removed for a substitute batter and re-enter the game as a pitcher once, provided the pitcher was not physically replaced on the mound**

Rule 3.03: Substitute Pitchers

- **Minor/Major Divisions:** A pitcher, withdrawn from the game for a substitute offensively or defensively, may not re-enter the game as a pitcher. This applies to continuous batting order. **EXCEPTION:** A pitcher may re-enter the game as a pitcher, if withdrawn for a pinch-hitter or pinch-runner, and then returned to the game at the beginning of the next half inning.
- **Junior/Senior Divisions:** A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate either the substitution, visits per pitcher, or mandatory play rule(s).

Rule 3.05: Starting/Sub Pitchers (Baseball/Softball)

- Starting pitcher **MUST** pitch to one batter
- Sub **MUST** also pitch to one batter, unless
inning ends on a putout



Reynolds



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Rule 4.00
Starting and Ending
the Game

Rule 4.01: Plate Conference

- **Managers exchange lineups**
 - UIC should check for accuracy
 - Umpires are “in charge” when exchanged
 - Late arrivals not required to play
- **What to cover:**
 - Introductions
 - “Players properly equipped?”
 - Ground rules, if any
 - Encourage to keep game moving
 - Remind managers to go thru UIC for subs



KEEP IT SHORT!!

Rule 4.09: Timing Play

- **Timing Play:** A runner attempts to score during a play in which the third out is made
- The umpire must judge when the runner touched the plate
 - If the runner touches the plate before the out
 - RUN COUNTS
 - If the runner touches the plate after the out
 - RUN DOES NOT COUNT
- Plate umpire **MUST** inform the official scorekeeper if the run does/doesn't count

Rule 4.10(e): Run Rule

- ***If after three (3) innings [INT/Junior/Senior League: four innings], two and one-half innings [INT/Junior/Senior League: three and one-half innings] if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.***
- If after four (4) innings [INT/Junior/Senior League: five innings], three and one-half innings [INT/Junior/Senior League: four and one-half innings] if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.
- If the visiting team has a lead of ***fifteen (15) or*** ten (10) runs or more ***respectively***, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
- Each league has the option of not utilizing this rule for regular season. But it should be documented in local rules.

Rule 4.19: Protests

- Judgment calls aren't protestable
- Protest of rule misinterpretation
 - Before next pitch or play
 - Umpires **MUST** discuss the call
 - After decision, manager can formally lodge the protest
 - UIC must submit a written report
- Protest of ineligible player
 - Before umpires leave the field



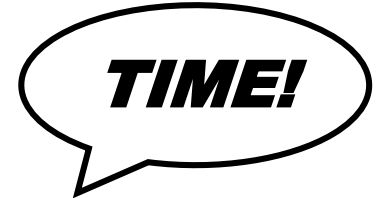
Rule 5.00
Putting the Ball in Play
– Live Ball

Game Management

- Keeping the game moving makes for a better experience for all involved
- Work during the entire game, start to finish
 - Hustle
- When possible, start game on time
- Enforce 1 minute or 8 pitches for pitcher warm-ups
 - Exception for substitutes
- Conferences should be reasonable in length
- Maintain constant supply of balls
- Call “Time” only when necessary

Rules 5.09 – 5.10: Calling Time

- When batter gets hit by pitch
- When someone gets seriously injured
- When manager, coach, player requests it **AND** umpire grants it
- When umpire wants to clean the plate, secure a base, eject the mgr, etc...
- When lights fail
- So players can tie their shoes
- Holding up 1 hand to stop pitcher = calling TIME!



Rules 5.09 – 5.10: Calling Time

WHEN NOT TO CALL TIME

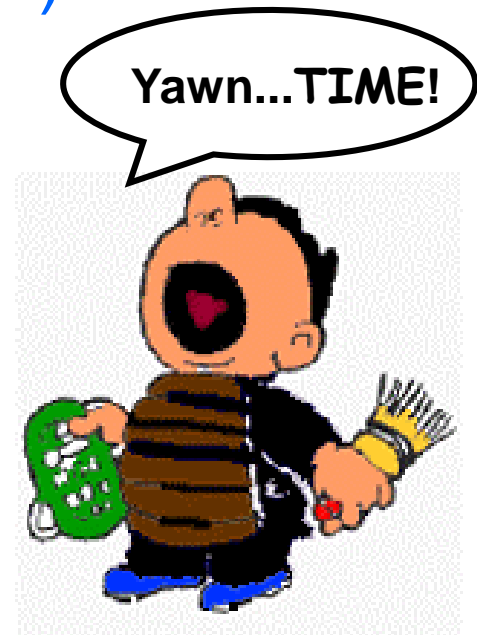
- Between batters / pitches / outs
- To give advantage to Offense:
 - Runner not steady or overruns base
- To give advantage to Defense
 - Returning ball to pitcher
 - Ball 4



Rules 5.09 – 5.10: Calling Time

WHEN TO DELAY CALLING TIME

- Illegal Pitch/Balk (Delayed Dead Ball)
- Coaches Interference (DDB)
- Catcher Interference (DDB)
- Plate Umpire Interference (DDB)
- Obstruction – No play being made on the obstructed runner (DDB)
- Runner Left Early (DDB if advance)
- Head first slide
- Max Runs reached – let play continue
 - May have a force out nullifying one or more runs
 - Safety issue



Rule 5.11: Putting Ball Back in Play

- All runners touching base (90' retouch)
- All fielders (except catcher) in fair territory
- Catcher in catcher's box ready to receive
 - Gear on, facing pitcher, can be standing
- Pitcher holding the ball - in contact with rubber
- Partner(s) are in position and ready
- Plate umpire signals and announces "Play"

Always Put the Ball Back in Play!!!

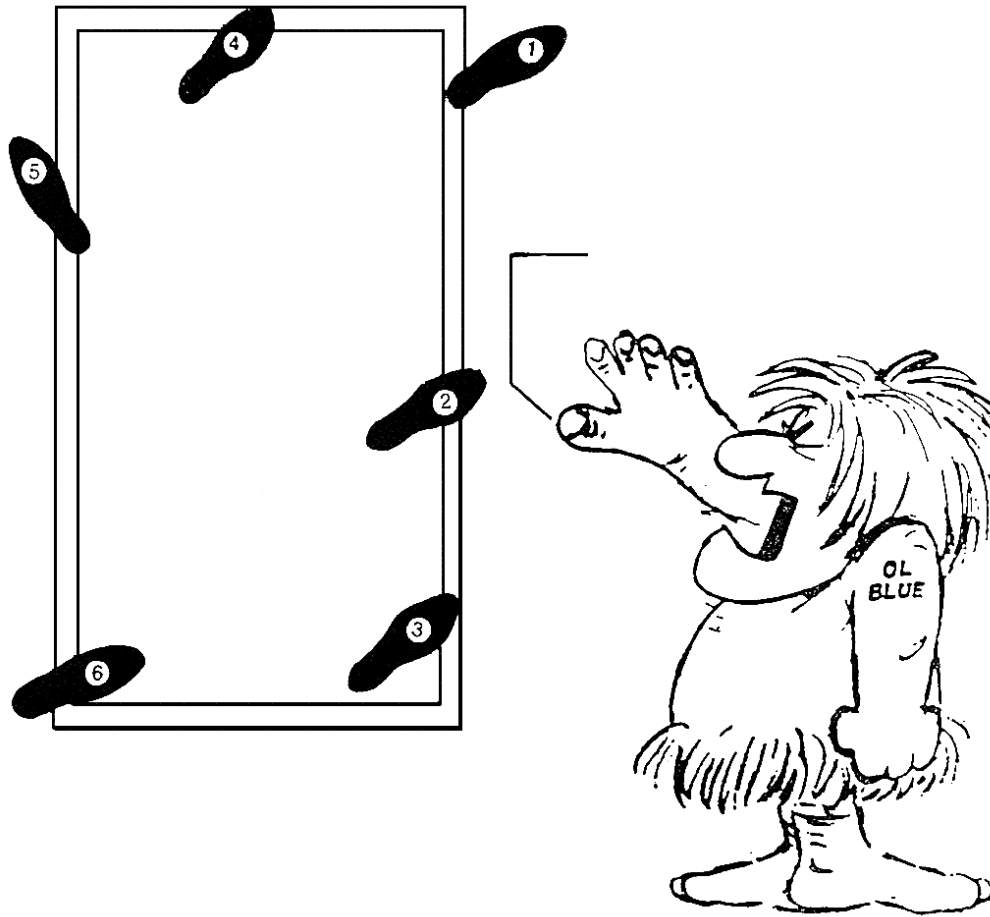
Rule 6.00
The Batter

Rules 6.02 & 6.03: Batter and the Box

- Batter must be in the box
 - Foot on the line: Okay
 - Foot over the line: NOT
- Batter leaves the box during the pitch
 - Ball or **STRIKE** as pitch dictates
 - No balk/illegal pitch if pitcher stops
- Batter refuses to get in box: Umpire calls a strike (pitch not required)

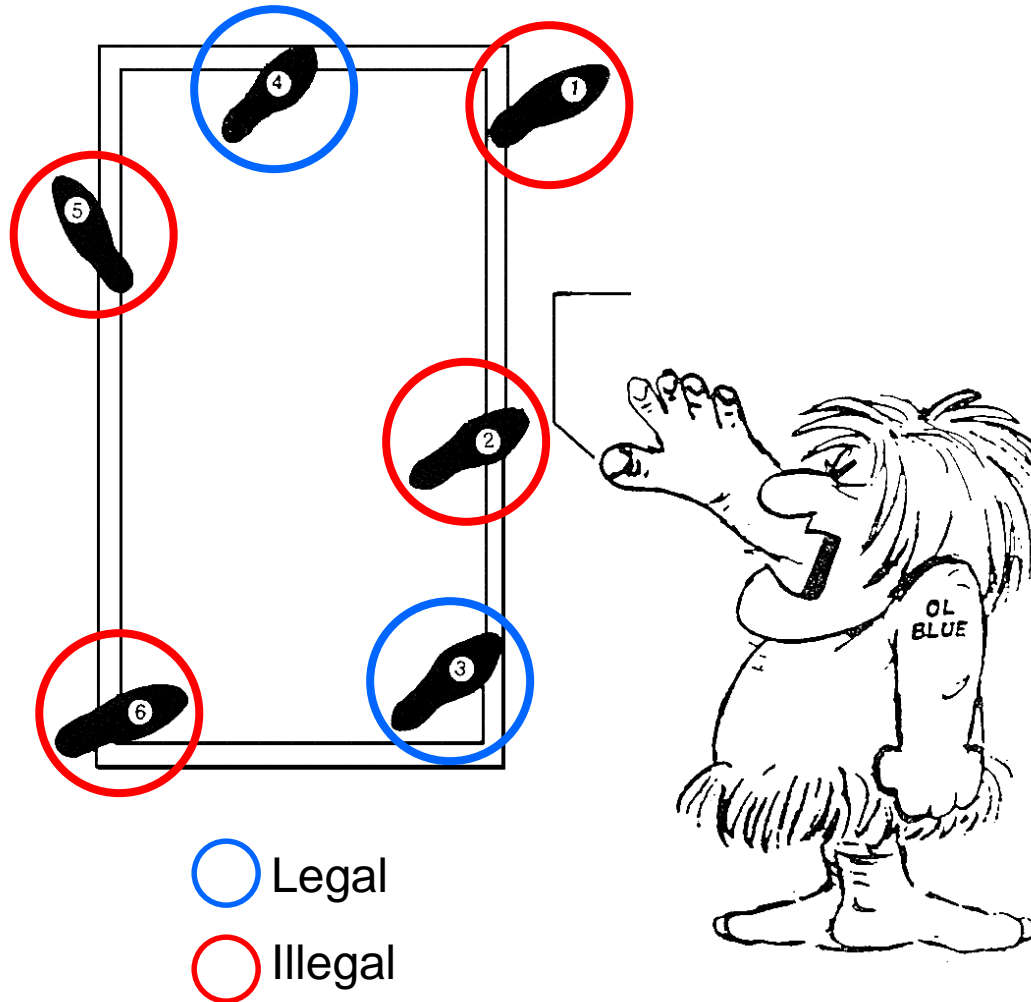


Rules 6.02 & 6.03: Batter and the Box



- What's legal and what's not before the pitch?

Rules 6.02 & 6.03: Batter and the Box



- What's legal and what's not before the pitch?
- Don't let pitcher pitch until batter is in the box.

Rules 6.02c:

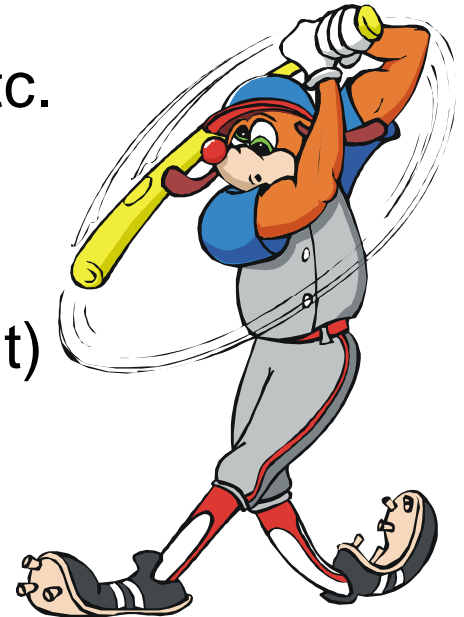
Batter and the Box

- **Local League Option for regular season (Mandatory in Tournament):** After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat.
- **Exceptions:**
 1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
 2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
 3. When the batter attempts a "drag bunt."
 4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
 5. When a play has been attempted.
 6. When time has been called.
 7. When the pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.
 8. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.
- **PENALTY:** If the batter leaves the batter's box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter. **Minor/Major Division:** No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior:** No pitch has to be thrown and ball is live.

Interpretation: Any WARNING issued under the Penalty for rule 6.02(c); is ONLY for that "At Bat". Warnings do not carry forward from one "At Bat" to the next for any player or team.

Rule 6.05: Batter is Out

- Other than the obvious, the batter is out when:
 - In Majors*/above, the third strike is not caught with less than two outs, but a runner is at first
 - The batter swings at a third strike, but the ball hits his hand, wrist, arm, etc.
 - He hits an Infield Fly
 - He is touched by his own fair ball (unless a fielder had a chance to field it)
 - The bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory



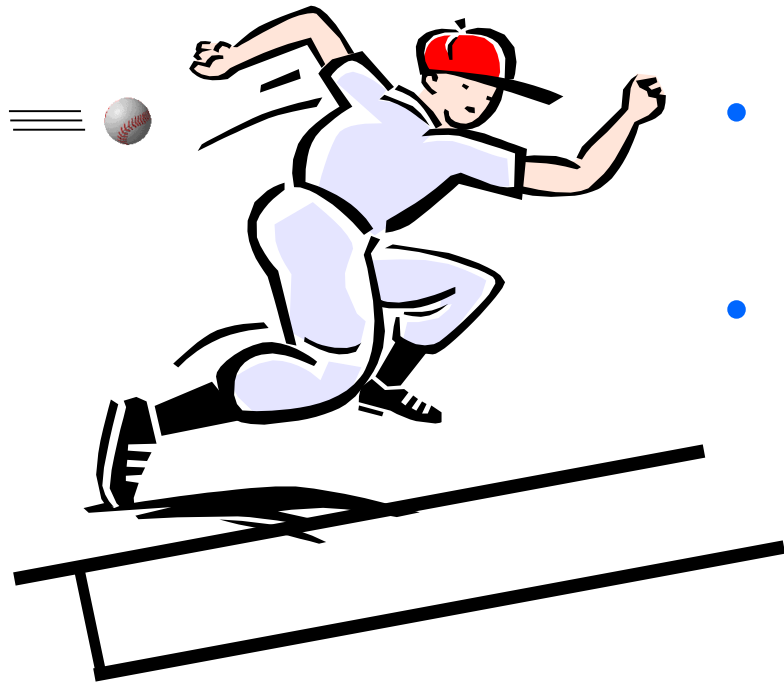
* Leagues may choose to opt out for regular season for Majors.

Rule 6.05: Batter is Out

- Other than the obvious, the batter is out when:
 - He intentionally hits/kicks a foul ball that could go fair
 - A fielder touches and intentionally drops his fly ball/line drive anytime there's a runner on 1B and less than two outs
 - Not out if ball falls untouched (unless an infield fly)
 - A preceding runner intentionally interferes to break up a double play
 - He violates the runner's lane rule



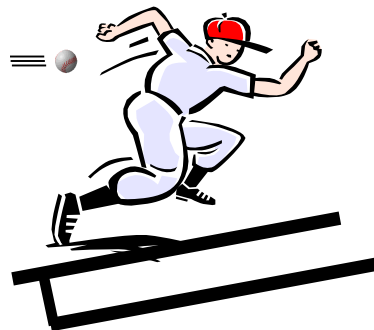
Rule 6.05j: Lane Violation



- Three-foot lane halfway from home to first
- Batter must run completely in lane
- If the batter is out of the lane and prevents the fielder at first from fielding the throw, **interference**

Rule 6.05j: Lane Violation

- Throw towards first hits batter: **Out**
- First baseman can't catch throw: **Out**
- Catcher doesn't throw: **No penalty**
- Catcher hesitates, then throws late: **No penalty**
- Catcher throws wild and then tries to blame batter: **No penalty**
- Catcher purposely hits batter and ball isn't going towards first: **No penalty**
- Ball thrown towards home hits batter: **No penalty**



Rule 6.06: Illegal Batter Action

- The batter is out when
 - He hits the ball with a foot completely out of the box and on the ground
 - He steps from one box to the other when pitcher is ready to pitch
 - He interferes with a play on a runner while at bat





**The entire foot
must be
completely out
of box.**

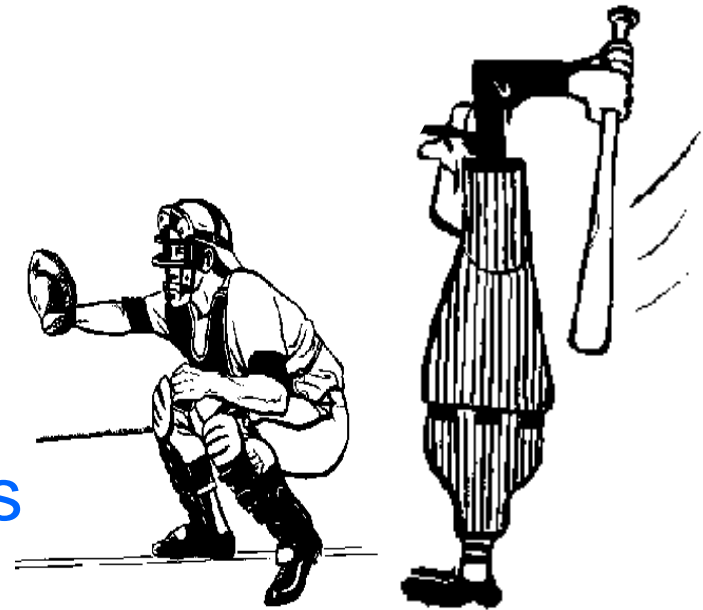
On The Line

Umpires View of an Illegally Batted Ball



Rule 6.06c: Batter Interference

- Steps/stumbles out of the box and impedes catcher's throw to retire a runner
- Stays put in the box and affects a play at the plate
- Intentionally impedes catcher's throw while in the box
- Throws his bat and hinders a fielder



Rule 6.06c: Not Batter Interference

- Stays in box and does nothing out of the ordinary
- Backs out and unintentionally kicks a loose ball
- Runner is put out despite the batter's action
- No play being made (dead ball)
- Catcher's throw to pitcher hits batter or bat (live or dead, depending on intent)



Rule 6.06d: Illegal Bat

- Before batter steps in or after next batter steps in box:
 - Remove bat only
- After batter steps in box:
 - Batter is out
 - Lose one eligible adult base coach (not ejected)
- After the ball is hit: (Defense has the option)
 - **Defense takes play:**
 - Lose one eligible adult base coach
 - Any advances resulting from use of the illegal bat are **Legal**
 - **Defense takes penalty:**
 - Batter/runner is out
 - Lose one eligible adult base coach
 - Any advances resulting from use of the illegal bat are Nullified



Rule 6.07: Batting Out of Order



- *Improper Batter*: Batter who is batting out of turn
- *Proper Batter*: Batter who should be up to bat
- If defense appeals before IB completes at bat:
 - Just fix it
 - PB comes to the plate and simply assumes count
- If defense appeals after IB completes his at-bat
 - PB is ruled out
 - Result of at bat is nullified (except what happens during at bat)
 - Next batter up is the batter after the PB

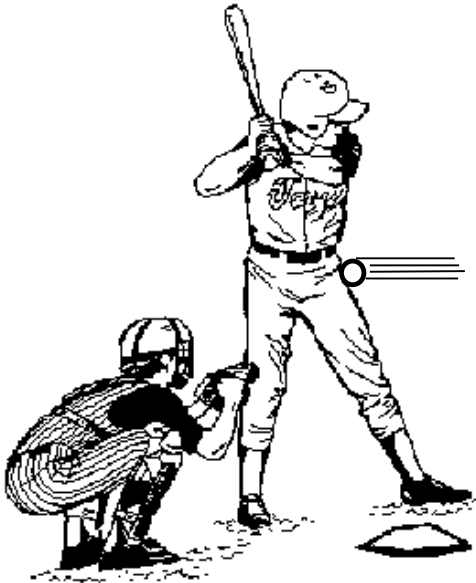
Rule 6.07: Batting Out of Order

- Defense must appeal before next pitch or play
- If defense fails to appeal
 - IB's at-bat counts
 - IB now becomes the PB
 - Next batter up is the batter after the new PB
- Offense cannot appeal their own mistake
- Umpires and scorekeepers:
SHHHH!!!



Rule 6.08: Batter Gets First

- Batter gets hit by pitch, unless
 - He doesn't try to avoid the pitch
 - He swung at the pitch
 - The pitch was in the strike zone
- Fielder interferes with batter
- Runner interference
- Umpire gets hit by batted ball before it passes a fielder other than pitcher



Rule 6.08(a)(2): Intentional Walk

- **Minor/Major Baseball:** prior to a pitch being thrown, the defense may elect to “Intentionally Walk” a batter
 - The manager must request and be granted “time” by the umpire and then inform the umpire of the defense’s intent to walk the batter.
 - The ball is dead and no other runners may advance unless forced by the batter’s award.
 - Four (4) pitches will be added to the pitch count.

Rule 6.08c: Defensive Interference



- Occurs when catcher or fielder prevents a batter from hitting the pitch
- **Penalty:** Batter gets first, runners advance only if forced or stealing
- If batter:
 - Misses pitch/hits uncaught foul: Call Time, enforce penalty
 - Hits pitch: let play end, manager gets choice of play or penalty,
- If everyone advances one base safely, ignore infraction

Rule 6.09b:

Uncaught Third Strike

- **Majors/above:** The batter may run to first on an uncaught third strike when
 - Nobody on first
 - Runner on first with two outs
- **Can't advance: "BATTER'S OUT! BATTER'S OUT!"**
- **Batter can't advance after entering dugout or other dead ball area**
- **Not interference if batter runs when he shouldn't**



Rule 7.00
The Runner

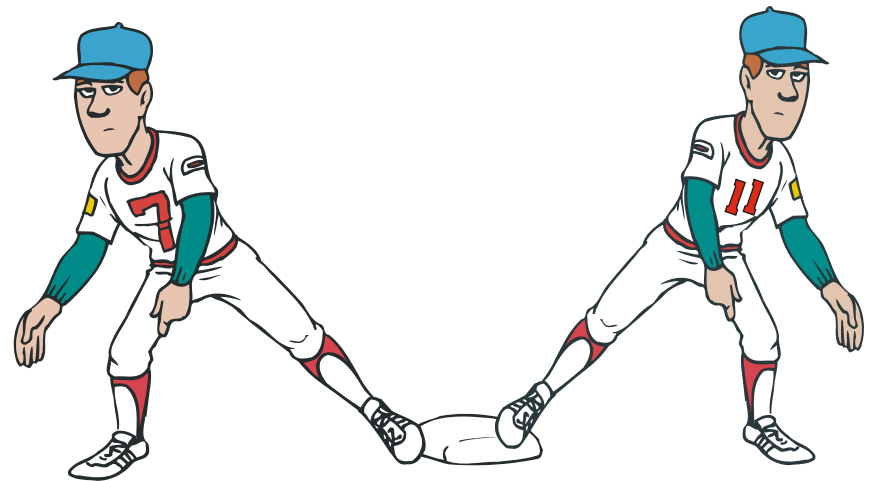
Rules 7.01, 7.02, 7.04:

- 7.01: Runner cannot return to previous base when pitcher is ready – on rubber with ball
- 7.02: Must touch all bases forwards and backwards
 - Anytime ball is live
 - Anytime bases are awarded
 - When returning to touch missed base
 - Not necessary following foul ball or runners returning following 7.13 violation (leaving early)
- 7.04: Runners get one base if fielder catches a fly ball then falls in DBT
 - If fielder stays on his feet, ball is Live



Rule 7.03: Two Runners on a Base

- When two runners are on the same base, it's not an automatic out
- Defense must tag runner not entitled to the base
 - No force then lead runner is entitled base
 - Force then trailing runner is entitled to base
- If fielder tags both, point to runner who is out to prevent confusion



Rule 7.05: Base Awards

- **Four bases:**

- fair batted ball in flight prevented from going over fence by detached equipment

- **Three bases:**

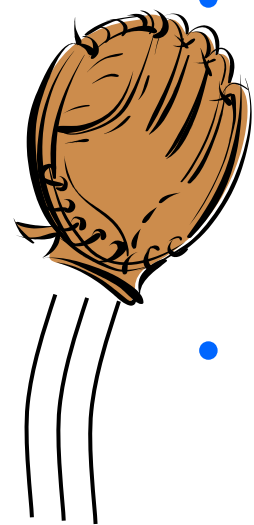
- batted ball is touched by detached equipment

- **Two bases:**

- Thrown ball is touched by detached equipment
- Batted bouncing ball goes out of play / stuck in fence
- Thrown ball goes out of play

- **One base:**

- Pitched ball goes out of play, stuck in fence or ump gear (two bases if pushed by catcher/fielder)
- Pitched ball is touched by detached equipment
- Pitcher throws ball from rubber out of play



Rule 7.05g: Ball Thrown Out of Play

- **Have to determine**
 - Who threw the ball?
 - If an infielder, was it an “initial” play or “subsequent” play?
 - Where were the runners?
- **If “initial” play by infielder**
 - Two bases from Time of Pitch
 - Unless **ALL** runners advance before ball was thrown
- **Any other:**
 - two bases from Time of Throw
- **Award is never from when ball goes out of play**





Obstruction

(How to recognize when it occurs)

- Official definition
 - Any act of a fielder who, while **NOT** in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. Examples: Fake tags, blocking a base, base path or home plate when not in possession of the ball.
- Concepts to understand when determining if obstruction has occurred
 - Fielders have a right to be where needed to field a batted ball. Therefore, even if they do not yet have possession of the ball, but are moving to or in a position to field a batted ball, they have first right of position. The runner needs to move around or avoid the fielder in this case (otherwise they risk being called for interference).
 - The above concept does not apply to fielders who are fielding a thrown ball. A fielder cannot be in a position or moving to a position that impedes a runner or blocks a base, home plate, or the base path, even while a thrown ball is in-flight and the fielder is preparing to make the catch (i.e., the catch is eminent).

The determination of whether obstruction has occurred is a judgment call and is not subject to appeal or argument by managers/coaches.

Rule 7.06: Obstruction

- 7.06a: Obstructed runner being played upon, or batter obstructed before reaching first
 - Immediate dead ball
 - Runners get base they would have achieved had there been no obstruction
 - Obstructed runner gets at least the next base from last one legally touched before the obstruction



Rule 7.06: Obstruction

- Fielder without the ball cannot impede a runner
- 7.06b: Obstructed runner not being played upon
 - Umpire signals and calls Obstruction
 - Delayed dead ball
 - End of play, umpire awards bases, **IF ANY**, that nullifies the obstruction
 - Obstructed runner could overrun his protection





Obstruction

(What to do when it occurs: two types of obstruction)

- What happens when obstruction occurs (and what penalty is enforced) depends on which of the two types of obstruction has occurred.
- Type A – Immediate Dead Ball ([example](#))
 - Occurs when a play is being made on the obstructed runner or when obstruction occurs on batter who hasn't yet reached 1st
 - Penalty enforcement
 - Immediately call "Time! That's obstruction!" Then award runner one base. Note: even if runner was going back into a base, the award is the next base.
- Type B – Delayed Dead Ball ([example](#))
 - Occurs when no play is being made on obstructed runner
 - Penalty enforcement
 - Call "That's obstruction" (but do not call time). Let the play continue. When play is over, award the runner whichever base the umpire deems the runner would have reached had obstruction not occurred. (Note: the umpire may not award any additional bases beyond where the runner ended up.)
 - After the play: "Time! We had obstruction on the runner! Runner ended up at second, and runner stays at second!"

Obstruction or Nothing?



Is There Possession? Obstruction?



What About This?



Rule 7.08: Runner is Out

- The not-so-obvious, runner is out when he:
 - Avoids a tag by going three feet out of his base path
 - Doesn't slide or attempt to get around a fielder waiting to make a tag
 - Slides headfirst going to a base (Majors/below)
 - Abandons first after touching it
 - Passes a lead runner
 - Runs bases in reverse order (except to correct missed base)
 - Misses home and doesn't return (must be appealed)





Interference

(What it is and how to recognize it)

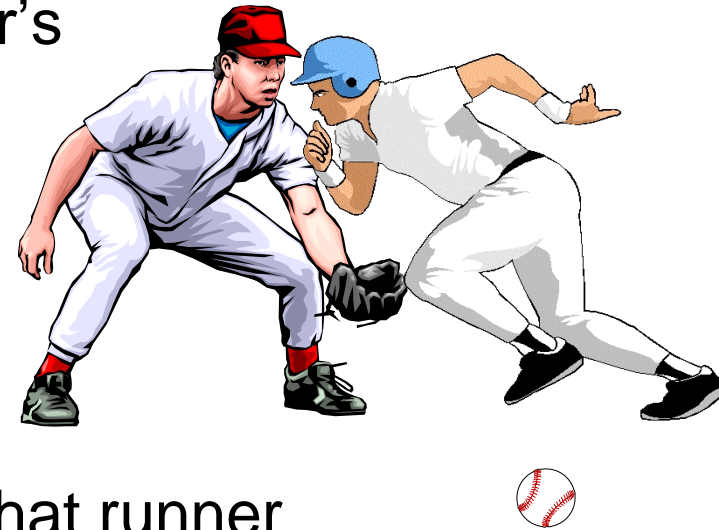
- Official Definitions

- **Offensive Interference**: Any act by the batter or runners that obstructs, hinders, impedes or confuses a fielder attempting to make a play. Examples:
 - Runner running into or impeding fielder in act of fielding a batted or thrown ball; batter impeding catcher from throwing out a runner who's stealing, runner from 1st sliding into fielder attempting to turn a double-play, runner who is hit by fair ball before it passes by a fielder.
- **Defensive interference**: Any act by a fielder that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.
- **Umpire's interference**: When (1) the plate umpire interferes with the catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or (2) when a batted ball hits a base umpire in fair territory before passing a fielder
- **Spectator interference**: When a spectator reaches out of the stands or comes onto the field and touches a live ball.

Most common

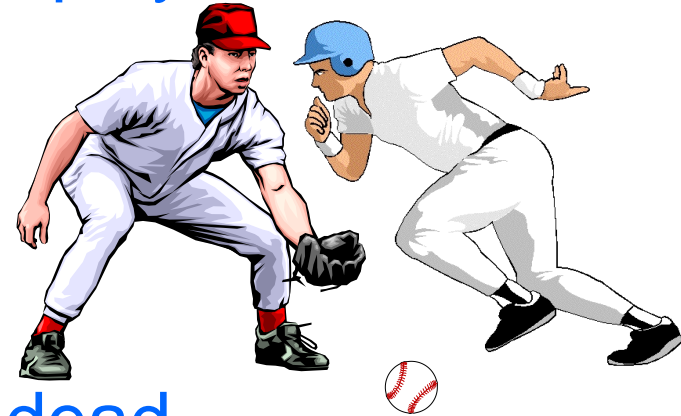
Rule 7.09: Runner Interference

- A runner is out for interference when
 - He hinders a fielder attempting to field a batted ball (no intent required)
 - He intentionally hinders a fielder's throw
 - A batter hinders a play on that runner at home with less than two outs (if two outs then batter is out – no runs score)
 - A teammate hinders a play on that runner
 - The base coach physically assists that runner



Rule 7.09: Runner Interference

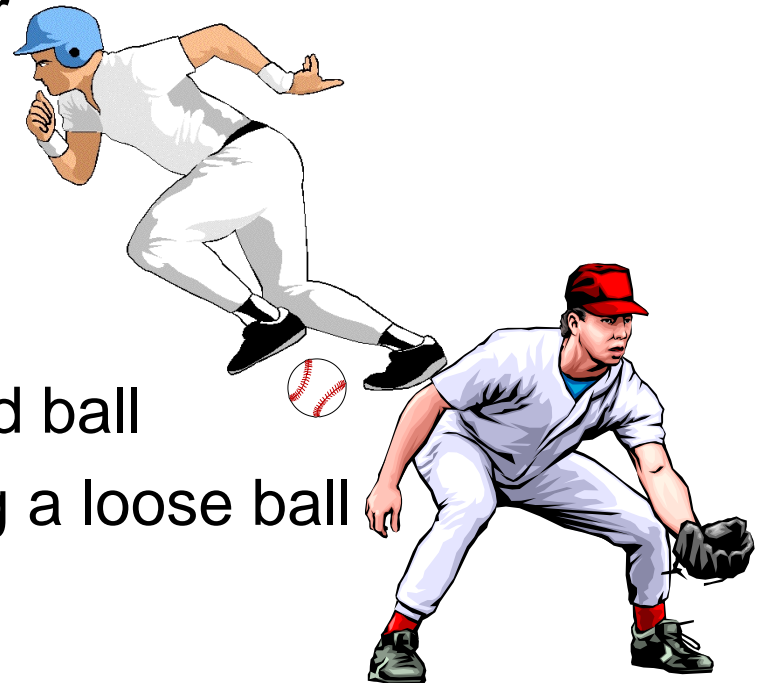
- A runner is out for interference when
 - The base coach acts like that runner to draw a throw
 - He is hit by a batted ball before an infielder (other than the pitcher) had a chance to field it
- If interference breaks up double play
 - By runner: he and batter are out
 - By batter-runner: he and runner closest to home are out
- Except for coach's assistance, ball is immediately dead
 - Allows defense to make additional plays



Rule 7.09: Runner Interference

- A runner is NOT out for interference when:

- He unintentionally hinders a throw
- He is hit by a batted ball after it passes all infielders (other than the pitcher) that had a legitimate chance at fielding the ball
- He is hit by a deflected batted ball
- He runs into a fielder chasing a loose ball (this is Obstruction)





Interference

(What to do: Enforcing the penalty)

- **Offensive Interference**
 - Immediately call “Time! That’s interference!” (**immediate dead ball**)
 - Member of offense who committed interference is out. Other runners awarded last base legally held or next base if forced (batter-runner awarded first if not yet at 1st).
- **Example situations**
 - **Example 1:** Runner on 1st and 2nd. Batter hits and ball strikes runner leaving 2nd. Umpire calls “Time!, That’s interference!”
 - Runner hit by ball is out, batter awarded 1st base and runner from 1st is forced to 2nd.
 - **Example 2:** Runner on 1st and 2nd. Batter hits and ball strikes runner leaving 1st. Umpire calls “Time!, That’s interference!”
 - Runner hit by ball is out, batter awarded 1st base and runner from 2nd returns to 2nd.
 - **Example 3:** Batter bunts the ball and in leaving for 1st, kicks the ball with his foot when ball was in fair territory.
 - Batter is out; all other runners return to their bases.
 - If ball was in foul territory, batter is out only if kick was intentional



Offensive Interference

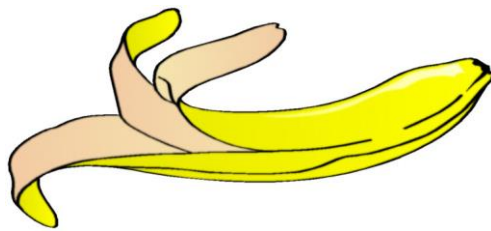
- *Additional Comments:*
- *⇒ When a runner is moving toward second base on a double play ball, there is no requirement for the runner to slide. The fielder must expect the runner to be there. As long as the runner is moving toward the base, there would generally be no interference.*
- *⇒ If sliding into second base, the runner must be able to reach the base with hand or feet. If the sliding runner is not able to reach the base with his/her hand or feet, and in the umpires judgment the slide caused the second baseman not to complete the double play, call interference and get the out at 1st base also.*
- *⇒ If the batter or a runner continues to advance after he/she has been put out, he/she shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.*
- *⇒ If contact between the runner and fielder occurs after the ball is released, there would be no interference.*

Rule 7.10: Appeal

- What constitutes a viable appeal?
 - Runner misses a base
 - Runner fails to tag up on a caught fly ball
 - Runner fails to return to first immediately
 - Runner fails to touch home and doesn't return
- How does the defense appeal?
 - Tag the guilty runner
 - Tag the offended base
- Appeal must be “clear and unmistakable”

Rule 7.10: Appeal

- Who can appeal?
 - Any defensive player with the ball
 - Not the manager or coach
- When can the defense appeal?
 - When the ball is Live
 - Before a subsequent play, attempted play, or illegal pitch/balk
 - Before all defensive players leave fair territory
 - Does not require ball returned to pitcher first
- Successive appeals after err not allowed





Coach Appeals & Umpire Conferences

- When can (or should) one umpire help another with a call?
 - 9.02c No umpire can over-rule or seek to reverse the decision of another umpire unless asked to do so by the other umpire.
 - Coach asks BU to seek “help” from Plate Umpire
 - If question deals with a judgment call, coach shouldn’t be appealing, although sometimes a coach will do so anyway under the “polite” explanation that he thinks “*your view may have been obstructed.*” If your view was not obstructed, simply say “Coach, I had a clear view and I ruled him out”.
 - BU **does not** have to seek opinion of PU if BU is confident in the call or ruling (but if you have any doubt, go ahead and consult).
 - **During “conference”:** Coach returns to dugout. Ruling umpire can ask for “help” ***but this is not to be interpreted as BU asking PU to make the call, nor should PU “take over” in an attempt to “correct the situation”.*** BU simply asks PU “what did you see”, or “did you see him drop the ball” (whatever the situation requires). Once BU is satisfied, turn and make your final call.
 - **After conference:** *Original umpire who made the call reinforces original call or changes call (can provide brief explanation ... such as “Ball was on the ground – Runner is Safe at First”)*

Coach Appeals vs. Judgment Calls

- Coaches can only argue or appeal a call when they deem a rule was violated or not applied correctly
- Coaches cannot appeal or argue judgment calls
 - Six Common Judgment Calls
 - Ball or Strike (I.e, strike zone)
 - Fair or Foul
 - Safe or Out
 - Other Judgment calls
 - Whether obstruction or Interference has occurred
 - Whether a hit ball is an Infield Fly
 - Check swing calls

Very common for a coach to argue a safe or out call. This is not proper and is not allowed, but they do it anyway.

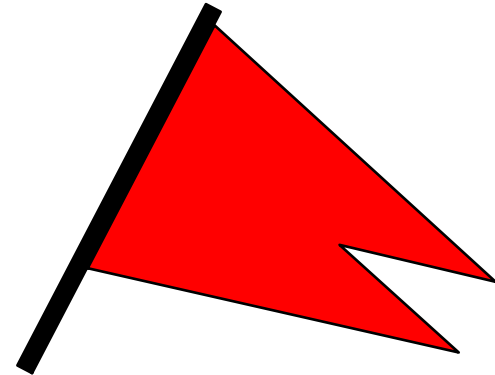


Handling appeals and arguments

- Coach disagrees with call
 - Must requests time from the dugout
 - Umpire may grant time ... but should do so **only after the play has stopped**
 - Common knee-jerk reaction is to grant time right away. Don't. Hold up your hand to acknowledge the request but wait until play is over.
 - Coach must approach the umpire who made the call
 - Coach can ask for a clarification of the call.
 - Tips for Umpire
 - Realize this situation is common, so get used to it.
 - Be confident in yourself, but not arrogant or argumentative
 - Be respectful You might have been wrong, so don't set yourself up to "eat crow". This will earn their respect for that game and those that follow.
 - Start you're response: "Coach, He was out".
 - Remember: Appeals are not debates.

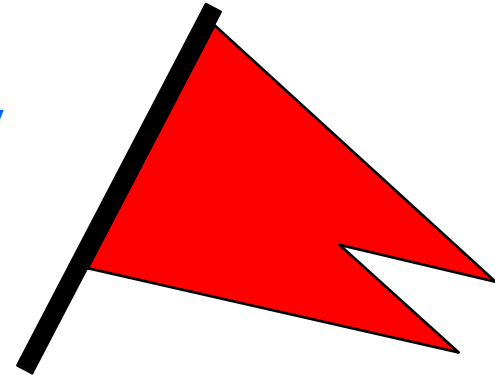
Rule 7.13: Leaving Base Early

- Runners cannot leave bases once the pitcher and catcher are “ready”
 - Pitcher on the rubber with the ball
 - Catcher behind the plate with mask on
 - Ball is live
- One guilty = all guilty
- Let play continue; all outs stand
- Penalty: all runners return unless forced



Rule 7.13: Leaving Base Early

- Umpire must judge the “value” of the hit
 - Runners advance no further, no matter what happens during the play
- If batter reaches on an error, nobody gets more than one base
- Bases loaded and batted ball stays in the infield, no runs will score
- Bases loaded, 2 outs, U3K, no runs will score
- Batter is retired during the play, everyone returns!



Rule 7.14: Special Pinch Runner

- Once each inning a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch runner one time during a game.

– **NOTE: Does not apply if the local league adopts the continuous batting order.**

For Tournament, SPR will be limited to only TWICE PER GAME
– Local Leagues may choose to implement this in Regular Season

Rule 8.00
The Pitcher

Rule 8.01: The Windup

- Preliminary position:
 - Pivot foot: Touching any part of the rubber
 - Free foot: In front, behind, or to the side of the rubber
 - Hands: Can be together or apart
 - If apart, pitcher can bring them together without starting his motion to pitch
- Pitching motion:
 - Free foot: Step to the back or side
 - Pivot foot: Pivot to the side, staying in contact
 - Hands: Brought together and lifted up
 - Free foot: Step forward



Rule 8.01: The Windup

- To disengage, pitcher must step back with his pivot foot first
- Pitcher may throw to a base by stepping directly to that base with his free foot
- Pitcher cannot start his windup and then stop
 - No runners: Nothing
 - Runners:
 - Balk (INT/JRs/SRs)
 - Illegal pitch (Majors/below)



Rule 8.01: The Set

- Preliminary position (Stretch):
 - Pivot foot: Touching any part of rubber
 - Free foot: In front of and parallel to pivot foot
 - Hands apart
- Intermediate position (going to Set):
 - Free foot: brought closer to pivot foot (optl)
 - Hands brought together
 - MUST come to complete stop (except Majors/below)
- Pitching motion: Lift and step forward with free foot



Rule 8.01: The Set

- To disengage, pitcher must step back with his pivot foot first
 - Hands must separate before reengaging
- Pitcher may throw to a base by stepping directly to that base with his free foot
- Pitcher cannot start winding up from the Set (except in Majors/below)



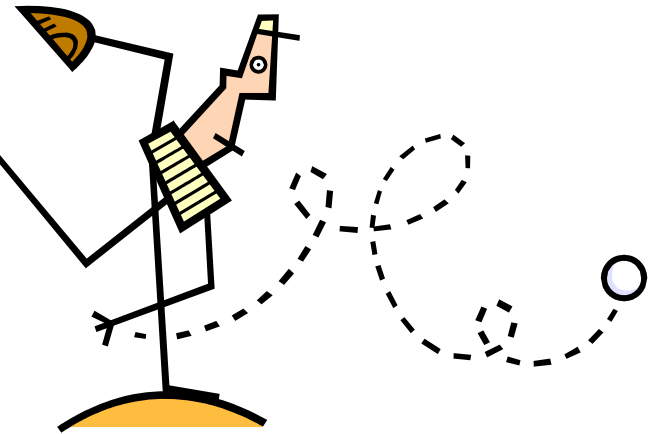
Rules 8.01/.02/.03

- 8.01: Pitcher can take signs from anybody
- 8.02a: Pitcher cannot go to mouth while on the mound
- 8.02c: Pitcher cannot intentionally throw at batter
- 8.03: One minute to warm up between innings
 - Not more than 8 pitches
 - More if pitcher hasn't warmed up
- Pitcher must pitch within 20 seconds (no base runners)



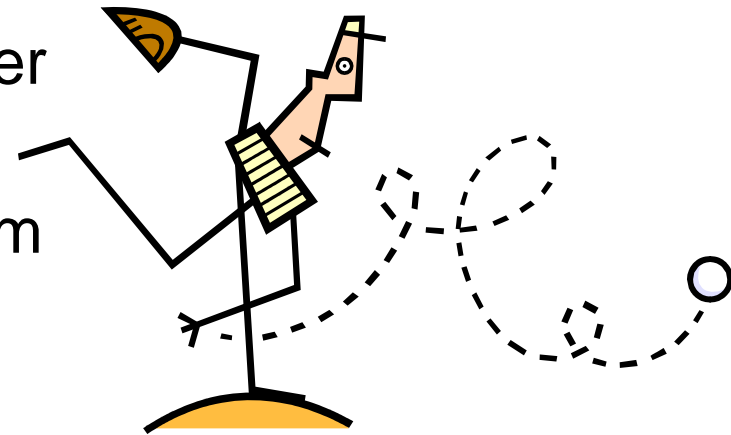
Rule 8.05: Balk/Illegal Pitch

- Balk on big field; Illegal Pitch on small field
- Cannot balk/deliver illegal pitch with no runners
 - Two exceptions in red (always an illegal pitch)
- A pitcher balks/delivers illegal pitch when he:
 - Starts his pitching motion, then stops
 - Throws to a base without stepping towards the base
 - Fakes a throw to first from rubber
 - Throws to an unoccupied base (except during an appeal)
 - Quick-pitches
 - Starts his motion to pitch while not in contact with the rubber



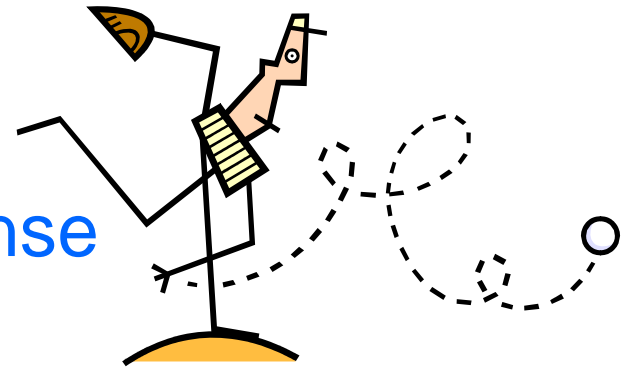
Rule 8.05: Balk/Illegal Pitch

- A pitcher balks/delivers illegal pitch when he:
 - Pitches without facing the batter
 - Stands on or astride the rubber without the ball
 - Feints a pitch while not in contact with the rubber
 - Delays the game
 - Drops the ball while on the rubber
 - Brings his hands together, separates them, then brings them together again



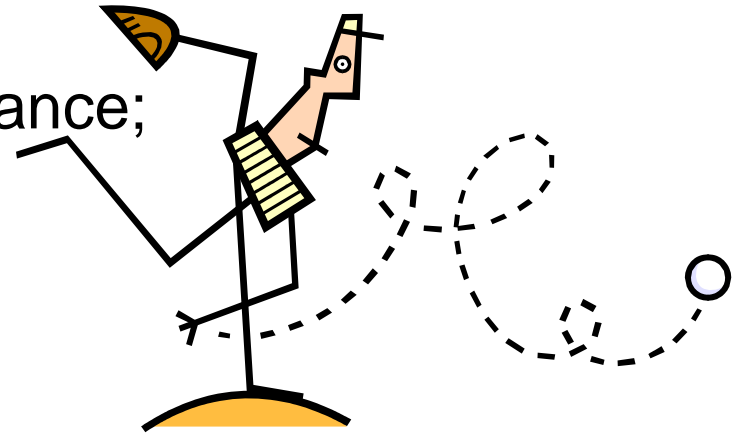
Rule 8.05: Balk/Illegal Pitch

- **Illegal pitch penalty (Majors/below)**
 - Dead ball, ball on batter (runners don't advance)
 - If the ball is pitched and batted, let play continue
 - If batter and all runners advance one base safely, ignore the illegal pitch (same if pitch is ball four)
 - If illegal pitch occurs on a throw to a base, ignore if all runners advance; otherwise, enforce penalty
 - Counts as a pitch
- **Manager does get a choice if the batted ball benefits the offense**



Rule 8.05: Balk/Illegal Pitch

- **Balk penalty (INT/JRs/SRs)**
 - Dead ball, runners advance one base
 - If the ball is pitched and batted, let play continue
 - If batter and all runners advance one base safely, ignore the balk (same if pitch is ball four)
 - Otherwise, no pitch, and runners advance one base
 - If balk occurs on a throw to a base, ignore if all runners advance; otherwise, enforce balk
- **Manager gets no choice**



Rule 8.06: Pitcher Conference

- Minors - Manager/coach may visit the same pitcher
 - Twice in one inning – pitcher must be removed on third visit
 - Three times in the game – pitcher must be removed on fourth visit
- Majors and Above - Manager/coach may visit the same pitcher
 - Twice in one inning – but pitcher must be removed on second visit
 - Three times in the game – but pitcher must be removed on third visit
- Any/all players may participate
- If catcher talks to pitcher after visiting with the manager/coach, it's a visit



Rule 8.06: Pitcher Conference

- If the adult talks to another defensive player, it's a visit
- It is not a visit:
 - If the offense asked for Time first
 - During between inning warm-ups if no delay
 - If the manager/coach is checking on an injury
 - Umpire should monitor conversation
 - In INT/JRs/SRs, if the manager replaces the pitcher



Rule 9.00

The Umpire



Rule 9.01(d)

- **9.01(d):** Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.
- **NOTE:** The local league has the option to adopt this rule application for regular season will be mandatory in Tournament. *The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, both the player and the manager SHALL be ejected from the game.*

Rule 9.01

- **9.01(e):** A manager, coach, or player shall not leave their position in the field or bench area during a fight or physical confrontation; a manager or coach who attempts to prevent a fight or restore order, in the umpire's judgment, is not in violation of this rule.
 - PENALTY: The umpire shall eject the offender(s) from the game immediately. Failure to comply with the ejection may result in the umpire suspending the game and referring it to the Board of Directors for further action.
- **9.01(f):** Clear the field when fans get too out-of-hand

Working with your partner

- **9.02: How to handle appeals**
 - Don't change judgment calls
 - Manager must go to the umpire who made the call
 - Manager cannot appeal on a checked swing Strike
 - **Don't overrule your partner!**
- **9.04(c): What to do when two umps make different calls simultaneously**
 - Don't let it happen!
 - Get together and fix it
 - UIC makes the final call



Rule 9.00: The Umpire

- **9.03(d): Game Coordinator**
 - **Required when no adult umpire is on the field**
 - Cannot be a manager or coach from that game
 - Participates in pre-game conference
 - Must stay at the field at ALL times (game stops if coordinator leaves)
 - Is solely responsible for judging darkness/weather
 - Has the power to eject!



Rule 9.00: The Umpire

- **Carrying the rulebook**
 - Don't let it be seen (ball bag)
 - Don't pull it out between innings
 - Should only use during a protest
 - Don't let the manager show you up!



Pre-game conference

SIGNALS & COMMUNICATION

- INFIELD FLY
- TIMING PLAY
- OUTS
- DROPPED COUNT
- PUT THE BALL IN PLAY
- CHECK SWINGS – APPEAL AND “YES HE WENT”

FAIR/FOUL

- TROUBLE BALLS DOWN THE RF LINE WITH BU IN “A” POSITION
- PU – UP TO THE BAG, STRADDLING THE LINE
- EYE CONTACT AND TIMING SOLVES PROBLEM OF DOUBLE CALL

CATCH/NO CATCH RESPONSIBILITIES

ROTATION

- FIRST TO THIRD COVERAGE

Post-game conference

- 1. Did I arrive in time to prepare for the game?**
- 2. Was I in position for every call?**
- 3. Was I properly prepared for each call?**
- 4. Working the plate: was my strike zone consistent?**
- 5. How was my timing?**
- 6. Were my signals clear & sharp?**
- 7. Did I communicate with my partner(s)?**
 - A. Hand signals (infield fly, timing play)**
 - B. Verbal (during a particular play)**
- 8. Plate umpire:**
 - A. Did I come up the foul lines as required? (Trailing batter/runner down the first base line).**
 - B. Did I come up to third base for a play?**
 - C. Did I help my partner on a rundown play if I could?**
 - D. Did I move to help my partner when I could have?**

Handling Situations



Philosophy

- Handling Situations starts with preparation
- Umpires must be calm and in control of every event.
- Remember: Managers, coaches and players eject themselves!

GAINING RESPECT

- Gained through hard work & dedication
- Handling situations in a fair, firm & professional manner.
- If an ejection is warranted, respect may be gained
- If an ejection is not warranted, respect will be difficult to come by
- Know when to become assertive
- Becoming assertive too soon/too late is a downfall of many umpires

GETTING HELP

- **Do we need to get help on every play that is close?**
- **NO! Bang – Bang plays are not for getting help.**
- **Plays that are in question, strive to get the Call right.**
- **TIMING !!!**

Handling Discussions

- Umpires must manage discussions with managers/coaches
- Use the “20 second” rule
- Listen!
- Think about your Body Language
 - **Posture**
 - **Hands**
 - **Make eye contact**
 - **Control your voice level**
- Let ‘em Go!

HANDLING SITUATIONS

- Limit situations to One on One
- Deal with the Manager
- Try to get person calmed down
- LISTEN
- Get game resumed ASAP
- Scenario #1

HANDLING SITUATIONS

- Try to keep person in game
- Issue a warning (If warranted)
- When issuing warning, be FIRM & STRONG
- Use appropriate language. Foul language can cause nothing but problems
- Avoid sarcasm
- Avoid “Having the last word”
- Scenario #2

Summary

- Have confidence
- Anticipate situations
- Be proactive
- Stay calm
- Think first, listen, think again, then talk
- Let 'em have the last word!
- Know when to say “You’re gone”

Questions?



"Now let me get this straight. This accident occurred right in front of your eyes, but *no one* saw what happened?"