

Base line vs Base path

BASE LINE: An imaginary line directly between bases.

BASE PATH: A line directly between a base and the runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting to tag that runner.

Definitions
USA Softball 2025

Base path is established when a player, with the ball, can make a play on a runner. The runner **MUST** continue in a straight line to the base. When a runner deviates from the established base path, the runner is declared out and the ball remains live.

The mechanic is to point at the runner and announce “the runner is out” while giving the out mechanic. Since the ball is live, other outs may be made by the defense.

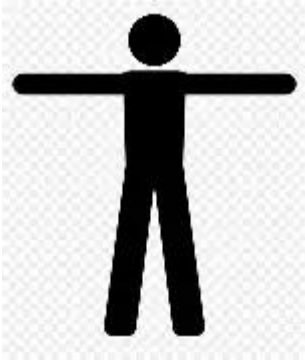
Rule 8 - Section 7 - THE RUNNER IS OUT

A. When running to any base in regular or reverse order and the runner runs more than three feet from the base path to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand or glove of a fielder.

Effect - Section A-C: The ball remains live.

When does the base path start?

Base path starts when the defensive player can make a play on the runner. Regardless of the location of the runner, at that moment, he/she must go directly to the base.



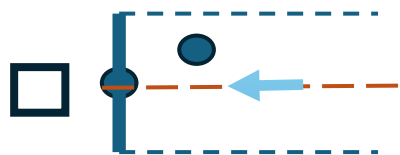
The defensive player must have the ball in the hand or glove that tags the runner.

The runner has 3 feet at the time a fielder can make a play.

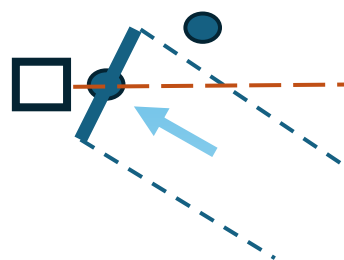
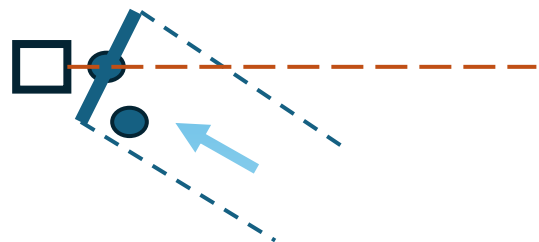
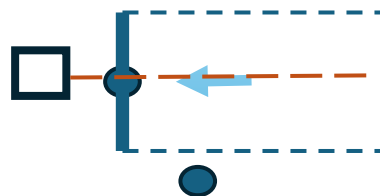
Most fielders have an outstretched arm of about 2 ½ feet and with a glove, that would be close to 3 feet.

Where the runner starts does not matter. They have to make a direct line to the base once the fielder has the ball and a play can be made.

Runner in base path



Runner out of base path



----- Base line

← Base path



Is the runner out of the base path?



Base path