

Common Sense  
and  
Fair Play  
Principles

# Umpire Authority

For example (just a couple of examples)

USA Softball states that umpires have the authority to rule on:

- **Any situation not specifically covered in the rules**

MLB OBR 8.01(c)

**“Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.”**

## Common sense and fair play doctrine

We need to use common sense and fair play when fixing a mistake or something not explicitly defined in the rulebook.

We have a broad authority when it comes to the field, players and rules.

We cannot ignore rules such as safe/out or fair/foul but we can rule on situations that are either not covered explicitly in the rule book or events that put a team at a extreme disadvantage or advantage.

# Common sense and fair play doctrine

## Examples:

Runner yells “I’ve got it” and the fielder makes the catch. Warn the player but no additional outs need to be called.

Player outside the dugout and a thrown ball is heading toward them. They reach down and pick up the ball. No runners are advancing. Call time, ask the player not to do that again.

Hint: If they were in the dugout, no issue....

No we do not ignore rules but sometimes we need to use the “Common Sense and Fair Play” principle.

If you have any doubt an unusual situation and you are not sure how to make a ruling....get with your partner and discuss the play.

Your guiding principle follow common sense and fair play.  
How many times does this happen in a season?

Rarely.