



# 2025 UMPIRE GUIDE

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## UMPIRE EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ As an Umpire you are not only representing yourself as an umpire, but also our organization, Alamo Area Umpires.
- ✓ **BE ON TIME!** It is **YOUR** responsibility to make sure you are on time. You should be at the field location 30 minutes prior to the start time to get your equipment and meet with your partner. You should be at the field of play 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to start first pitch on time as listed by the game time.
- ✓ **BE IN UNIFORM!** It is **YOUR** responsibility to be sure you are dressed in Uniform. If scheduled with a partner, you must match. If umpire attire is not agreeable or matching, the default uniform will be the Black shirt with Grey panels on the sides. (Often called the "MLB Black shirt"). As an umpire, presentation is important, and it starts with Uniform. Be sure your Uniform is clean, and your shirt is tucked in. No hats shall be worn backwards at any time!
- ✓ **HUSTLE AND WORK HARD!** Coaches and fans are much less likely to complain when you work hard to hustle to get in position to make accurate calls.
- ✓ You are the **Authority** when Umpiring. **Respect & Sportsmanship are the Expectation.**
  - Most calls are Judgment. **That's your judgment.**
  - Umpire decisions are final.
  - Welcome questions, not criticism.
  - Manage tough situations with your best judgment.
  - Report tough situations to the Director of Umpires after the game.
  - Any Warnings or ejections should be reported via



email or writing to the Director of Umpires within 24 hours of the start time of the game in which the incident occurred.

- ✓ **Umpiring is a Privilege & Commitment.** If you cannot make a game you have been assigned, It is **YOUR** responsibility to report the issue to the Director of Umpires **AND** find an adequate replacement.

**NO CELLS PHONES ON THE FIELD!!!**

## STANDARD UNIFORM

- ✓ Black Hat (either plain, with Alamo Area Umpire Logo, or with the Little League Logo).
- ✓ MLB Black Shirt with Grey side panels
- ✓ Grey Umpire Pants
- ✓ Solid Black or Black with white sole athletic shoes. Plate shoes or athletic shoes with hard toe cap are highly encouraged for plate assignments.

Umpires can wear other shirt colors as long as umpire crew matches. If no one matches or can agree on color, the default is this standard uniform.





## UMPIRE RANKS AND SCHEDULING

RANKS: All Umpires will be ranked by age or experience.

- JUNIOR UMPIRES - Any Umpire under the age of 18 years old will be classified as a "Junior Umpire" and cannot be assigned games without an adult supervisor and/or parent present. Permission to participate in activities must be signed by parent/guardian and submitted prior to any games or activities.
  - Junior Umpires are held to the same standard as all umpires.
  - Junior Umpires must complete a minimum of 2 Scrimmage Games and/or Training Games prior to receiving paid game assignments.
  - If after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Scrimmage/Training Game, the Junior Umpire does not successfully meet all expectations on their evaluations, further training may be assigned prior to paid game assignments.
- UMPIRE – Any Umpire over the age of 18 years old will be classified as an Umpire.
  - 1st Year Umpires with Alamo Area Umpires may need to meet expectations of evaluations of a scrimmage and/or training game before being assigned a paid assignment.
  - Umpires will get regular Umpire assignments, and if exhibiting ability to be a "Crew Chief", may also be assigned the "Crew Chief" role in games.
- CREW CHIEFS – Umpires who consistently meet or exceed expectations on their evaluations may be classified as a "Crew Chief".
  - Crew Chiefs will show efficiency in ability to



- umpire games as a sole umpire on the field.
- Crew Chiefs will be able to lead crews of 2, 3, 4 and up to 6 umpires for a game.
  - Crew Chiefs will be eligible for time and a half pay when needing to call a game alone.
  - **INSTRUCTORS** – Crew Chiefs that consistently demonstrate exemplary evaluation scores and leadership may be assigned as an Instructor.
    - Instructors will fulfill all the Roles within the organization as needed.
    - Instructors may evaluate umpires during games, and provide post-game feedback to crews and/or individual umpires.
    - Instructors will help train all umpires as needed.
    - Instructors will attend meetings in an effort to plan for upcoming clinics, roles and/or sessions to lead for clinics.
    - Instructors may act as a Site Manager, overseeing a location of games going on for the day or assigned time period.
  - **SITE MANAGER** – Assigned by the Director of Umpires as the individual overseeing games start and end times, umpire / game ruling issues, and assisting where needed to ensure the Umpiring Operations of a location are met.
    - The Director of Umpires is solely responsible for assigning Site Managers
  - **DIRECTOR OF UMPIRES**—to be used interchangeably with **MANAGING DIRECTOR**, may take ranking recommendations from Instructors, but is solely responsible for the assignment of all ranks.



SCHEDULING: Umpires scheduled for games must meet a minimum overall ranking score of 4. Games needing 1 umpire will be scheduled meeting a ranking score of 3. The Director of Umpires has overall authority to schedule where needed based on availability and staffing needs.

- Junior Umpires Rank Score is 1.
  - Cannot umpire alone, or without an adult supervisor or parent / guardian present.
- Umpire Rank Score is 2.
  - Cannot solo umpire a game.
- Crew Chief Rank Score is 3.
  - Crew Chiefs may solo umpire a game if needed.
  - Priority of scheduling will always remain to be 2 umpires for “kid pitch” and above games.
- Instructor and above Rank Score is 4.

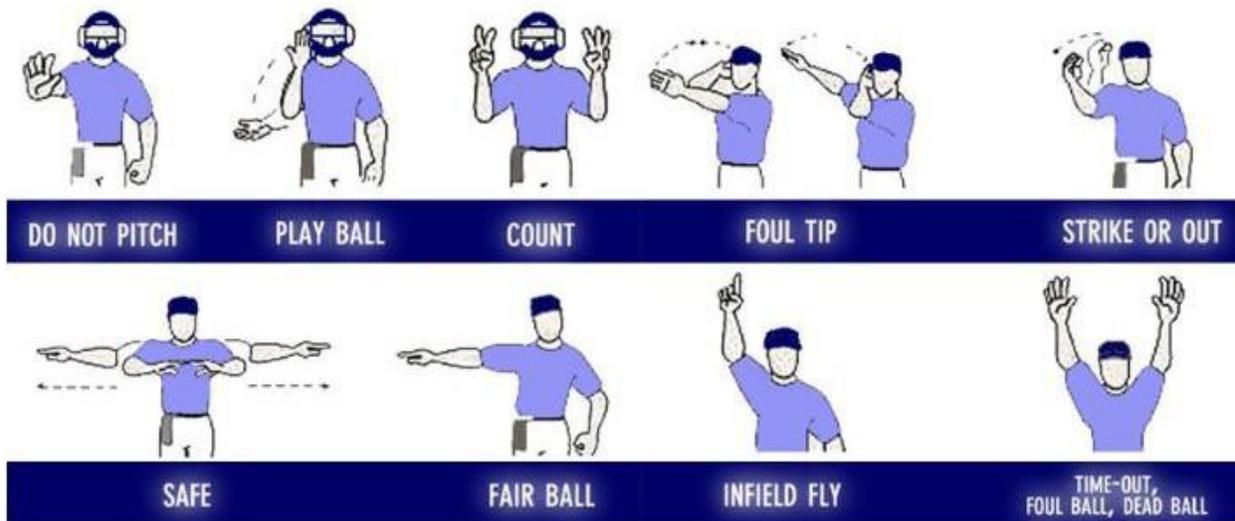
## **UMPIRE MEMBERSHIP & DUES**

All Umpires with Alamo Area Umpires will complete a Membership Agreement and pay an annual membership fee of \$25.

All Junior Umpires will have a Parent/Legal Guardian sign a participation an Membership Agreement, and pay an annual membership fee of \$25.



## THE SIGNALS



- ✓ **READ - PAUSE - REACT.** Remember in each of these calls timing is everything. Selling the call is a matter of the game situation and each umpire will respond differently. There is nothing wrong with putting a little extra on the gesture and voice, in fact it is an important part of the game. In time each umpire develops their own personal sense of rhythm and timing, style and flair.
- ✓ **PLAY.** Along with strike and ball, this is the one call the plate umpire will make most often during a game. Pointing at the pitcher with the right hand and calling **"Play"**. **The umpire shall call for "Play"**.
- ✓ **STRIKE - Always signaled** with the right hand, each umpire develops a personalized system for signaling the strike. Some do the traditional clenched fist (hammer strike), or the strike out to the side with an open hand. Some umpires face forward, some turn. Some call strike then signal, others do both simultaneously. In Little League, the hammer strike is the preferred mechanic.



Should you say "Strike," signal "Strike" or both?

"Generally, on a swinging strike, as the plate umpire, the call is NEVER VERBALIZE but rather indicate to the players and fans with a raised right arm. The exception to the NOT VERBALIZING is on a third strike; the plate umpire again raises his right arm and says "Strike Three" firmly but does not "sell the call." If the catcher has dropped or trapped the pitch, you still go through with a firm "Strike Three" keeping eye-contact with the batter/catcher."

- ✓ **BALL. Never signaled.** The general preference is that the verbal signal "**ball**" loud enough that both dugouts can hear it. Calling "**ball**" allows you to maintain the rhythm of your calls. Never indicate why a pitch was a ball, for example: "High, Ball One", or indicating with your hand where the pitch was.

**BALL FOUR.** Ball four is the one ball count that an umpire should announce aloud. You should **NEVER** point to first base even with the left hand. Just say "**BALL FOUR**". If the umpire points to first after the pitch and the defense thinks it's strike 3 and starts to leave the field chaos abounds. Even if you use the left hand, the players may not take note of which hand it was and be confused.

- ✓ **TIME.** Raising both hands shoulder width apart and pushing forward while calling "**TIME.**" All umpires on the field will immediately signal the time call. Sometimes the call must be made several times in order to shut things down. Once time is called every effort must be made by all umpires to stop the action taking place. It is preferred that umpires maintain the time signal with at least the right arm.



- ✓ **THE COUNT.** Balls are signaled using the left hand. Strikes are signaled using the right hand. A full count is always signaled as "three balls, two strikes" and never signaled using clenched fists. The count is relayed back to the pitcher on "odd counts", such as "two balls, one strike" or "one ball, two strikes" or "three balls, no strikes".
- ✓ **SAFE.** Both left and right arms are raised together, to shoulder level, in front of the umpire and then a sweeping motion is performed out, parallel to the ground, palms down. The verbal call of "**Safe**" may be made. To complete the call you may elect to return to the set position. To sell a safe call you might consider doing it two or three times in rapid succession. It is not always necessary to even make the sign or call. If the play is obvious do nothing. If there is no play on a runner, do nothing.
- ✓ **OUT!** The clenched right fist and a short hammered motion seem to be favored by most umpires. Again, personal style is acceptable as long as it does not distract you from seeing any further plays taking place. It is advisable to wait a second or two before making this call. Watch that the ball does not come loose and check that the fielder is really in possession of the ball. The call can be made with only a gesture or can be sold with a loud call of "**Out!**" Signal every out.



- **Uncaught Third Strike.** Where this call is made the base umpire is often in a better position to relay the possession or trapping of the ball to the plate umpire. Signaling, not calling, a small discreet "out" means the ball was caught. Pointing to the ground with your right hand can mean the ball was trapped or not caught.
- **Out on the force!** This is a simple out call. No pointing needed as the place is being made to one person on one base as a force. No tag need be applied. Read, Pause to voluntary release, and call.
- **Out on the tag!** Point at the runner with the left hand, signal the out with the right hand. Complete the sign by saying "out" plus "on the tag" if you want to sell it a touch. **Safe, he missed the tag!**
- **Selling It.** A "selling it" call that occurs when a runner slides under or around the tag or the tag is high. You can save some grief by indicating a loud **"safe"** and following it with a tapping motion where the tag was. Everyone will know you saw the tag and most will assume the runner had the bag before it.
- ✓ **Fair Ball.** The right hand points into the field in fair territory. **There is no call "Fair"**.
- ✓ **Foul Ball.** The same signal as **"Time"** but the call becomes **"Foul."** Umpires often add a point into foul territory with one hand after giving the time signal.



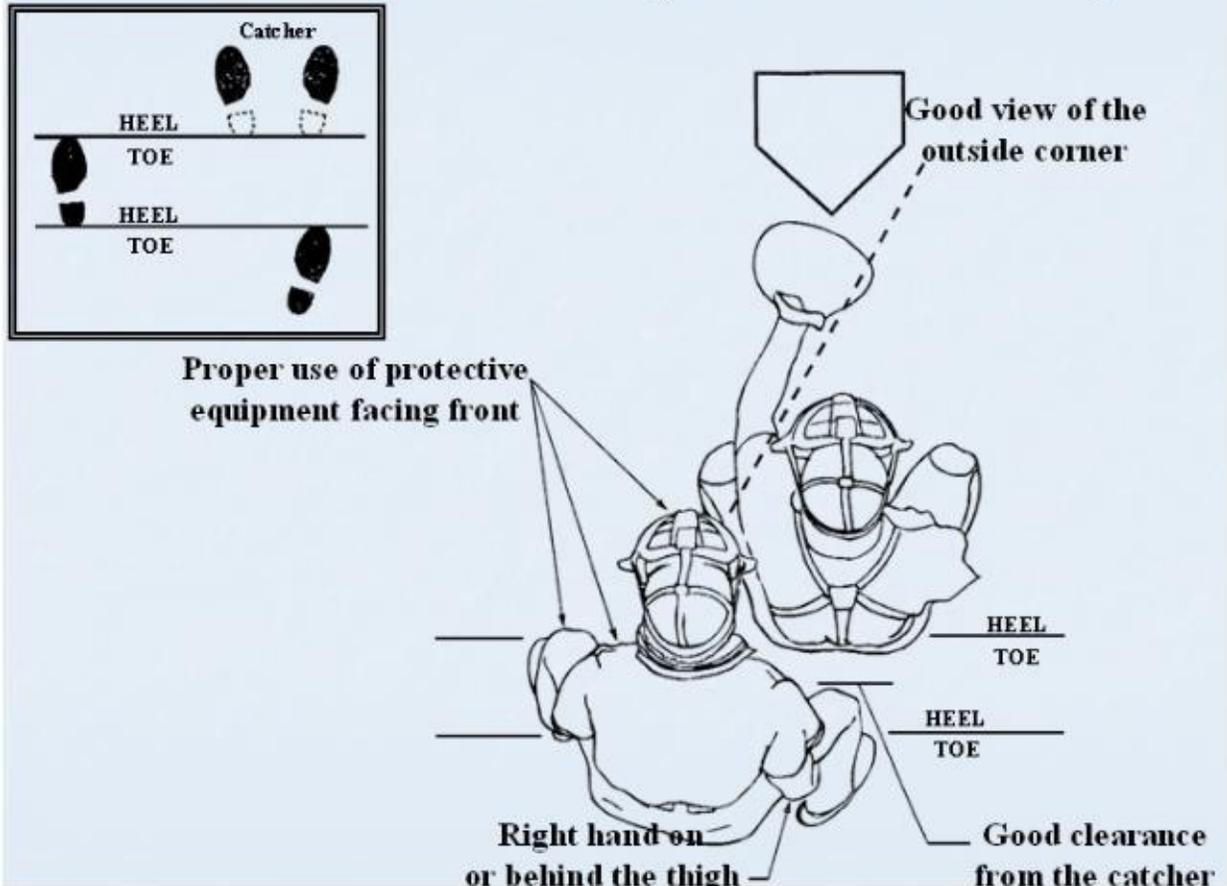
- ✓ **Dead Ball.** The same signal as **"Time"** but the call becomes **"Dead Ball"** or is simply left at "Time." The base umpire needs to pay specific attention to a ball hitting the batter in the batter's box. The base umpire will immediately call **"Time"** or **"Dead Ball"** if the plate umpire did not see the infraction. **Never say "foul"** in this situation.
- ✓ **No Pitch.** The same signal as **"Time"** but the call becomes **"No Pitch."** If you are the plate umpire, step away from the plate.
- ✓ **Catch or No Catch.** When signaled the **"catch"** resembles the **"out"** signal. No verbal indication needs to be given. The **"no-catch"** signal resembles the **"safe"** signal except the call of **"No Catch"** is clearly given. Sometimes it will be necessary to repeat this sign several times. An addition to the "No Catch" is the juggling routine which indicates the fielder did not have possession. Juggle when the fielder is on the base for the force out but not in full possession of the ball.

The verbal call needs only to be given on a trouble ball, for example: a ball caught diving or below the fielder's knees. Routine fly's can be signaled but do not have to be as they are obvious catches. If a ball is on the foul lines first signal whether the ball is fair or foul, then the catch or no- catch status if desired.



## HOME PLATE UMPIRE POSITIONING

### THE SLOT (TOP VIEW)



- ✓ Becoming comfortable in the Slot position behind home plate is the most important thing you can do to ensure you get a good view of the ball as it crosses the plate area.
- ✓ The Slot position is the area just behind the catcher, where you are lined up in the open space between the batter and the inside corner of the plate. You will line up to the left or right of the catcher depending on whether the batter is batting on the left or right side of home plate.



- You may choose to stand a bit further back from the catcher than shown in the graphic.
- Keep your front foot a bit forward of your back foot to gain a better view angle over home plate.
- In contrast to the Slot position, it's tempting for beginning umpires to stand directly behind the catcher as it feels safer. But your view from this position, especially in the lower portion of the strike zone, is obscured by the catcher.
- When the catcher needs to move quickly behind you to retrieve a live ball, you should reverse pivot on your front foot to allow the catcher to quickly get past you. This technique is called "opening the gate".
- From the Slot position, follow the ball with your eyes (not head) as it leaves the pitcher's hand and arrives into the catcher's glove. You should look diagonally across the plate as the ball crosses it to help you better see the strike zone including the outside portion of the plate. Stay still from the moment the pitch is thrown until you make your call.



## UMPIRE TIPS

- ✓ **Favor angle over distance when making a call on a runner.**
  - Ideally, try to be about 10 feet from a play being made on a runner and at a 90 degree angle (approximately) between the play on the runner and from where the ball is being thrown.
  - The ideal is not always possible, so favor angle over distance. You want to be firmly set, not moving, when it's time to make your call.
  
- ✓ **Look for just one outcome when deciding your call.**
  - To simplify your decision process, look for just one outcome when there are two possibilities. Some examples:
    - Did you see an out? If not, runner's safe.
    - Did you see a strike? If not, must be a ball.
    - Did you see a rule violation? If not, "you got nothin'" - and there's no penalty to apply.
  - This approach also reduces indecision and second guessing, especially on bang-bang plays and outright misses. And when a coach complains about a blown call, you can fall back on the conversation-ending retort, "I can only call what I see Coach" – (only helpful once per game though).



## ✓ **Take your time making your call**

- Whether a safe or out call, ball or strike, fair or foul, catch or no-catch, calling time ... don't hurry your call.
- Take a few extra seconds to allow for the unexpected like a dropped ball by a fielder making a tag or a ball swerving from fair to foul territory. Wait a moment after the pitch reaches the catcher to process the trajectory of the ball through the batter's strike zone. The extra time will help you from calling what you THINK is about to happen instead of the true outcome.
- Delaying your call also gives others confidence that you're umpiring diligently and thoughtfully, making them less likely to contest your call. It's especially important for dead ball calls like a foul ball, which requires that all play immediately stops. A premature, incorrect foul ball call cannot be undone, and could impact whether runners advance and/or score!

## ✓ **Make your call with confidence (and demonstratively!)**

- You signal most calls with a hand/arm gesture and by shouting it out. It's important to do both, so everyone (players, coaches and fans), both far and near, understand your call and respond accordingly. For example, runners will stop and return to their bases when they hear your foul ball and time out calls. A distant base coach will read from your arm gesture that a third out was called and thus refrain from sending a runner.



- The closer the play - strike or ball, out or safe, fair or foul – the more emphatic you need to be! If you don't know what the right call is – be even more emphatic!! A meek, so-so whimper of a call, will usually invite a dispute by a coach. Veteran umpires call this "selling your call". So be outwardly confident in your calls, especially when you're not actually so confident.

## ABBREVIATIONS & NOMENCLATURE

- ✓ Umpires
  - Home **Plate Umpire = PU**
  - Base Umpire = **U1, U2, U3...and so on.**
- ✓ Bases = **1B, 2B, 3B, Home**
- ✓ Base Runners
  - Runner on 1B = **R1**
  - Runner on 2B = **R2**
  - Runner on 3B = **R3**
  - Batter-runner = **BR**
- ✓ Field Position:
  - **F1**= Pitcher
  - **F2**= Catcher
  - **F3**= 1stBaseman
  - **F4**= 2ndBaseman
  - **F5**= 3rdBaseman
  - **F6**= Shortstop
  - **F7**= Left Fielder
  - **F8**= Center Fielder
  - **F9**= Right Fielder



## BASIC ASSIGNMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PU

### ❖ Plate Umpire (PU)

- The plate umpire manages the game and substitutions. The plate umpire is responsible for leading the **plate meeting** and **pre/post-game umpire meeting** and he handles **signals** with the base umpire.
- The plate umpire calls balls and strikes and makes all safe/out calls at home plate in 2-man mechanics.
- The plate umpire has **all catch/no-catch calls** on all fly balls, both in the outfield and the infield on small diamond in 2-man mechanics. This releases the base umpire to watch base runners.
- The plate umpire has **all fair/foul calls**, both in the infield and outfield in 2-man mechanics. In 3-man mechanics or higher, the plate umpire will determine if base umpires will go out on their flyball responsibility areas, or if the Plate umpire will have all fly balls to include balls challenging the foul line.
- The plate umpire must come out from behind the plate when the ball is hit and get the best possible position to call fair/foul or fly ball outs. Secondary responsibilities include pulled foot, swiped tag, runner lane interference at first, and being the second set of eyes on the play to offer assistance if needed.



## BASIC ASSIGNMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR U1

### ❖ **Base Umpire (U1) 2-Man Mechanic**

- You have the safe/out call on all base runners at all bases except home.
- You have the base-touch and tag-up on all runners at all bases except home. You also handle all appeal calls at all bases except home.
- You watch for runners leaving early at all bases.
- **You own all base runners at all times from first base through third base** (again, with one exception).
- On hits to the outfield, you must come **inside** the diamond; on hits to the infield, you must stay **outside** the diamond. This is **the Golden Rule**.

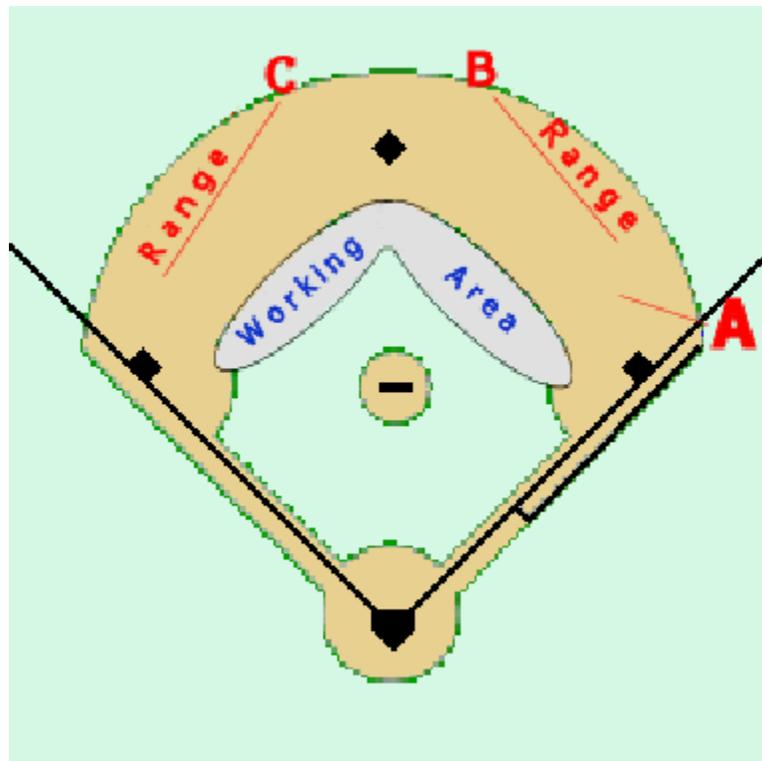
**“If the ball is out, go in. If the ball is in, stay out.”**



## START POSITIONS FOR BASE UMPIRE:

### A, B, C

The start positions for the Base Umpire are simple:



- ✓ No runners on base, Position **A**
- ✓ With R1 only, Position **B**
- ✓ In all other situations, Position **C**



## THE GOLDEN RULE FOR BASE UMPIRE: INSIDE OUT/ OUTSIDE IN

- ✓ On hits to the **INFIELD**, you remain **OUTSIDE** the diamond and slide in your working range.
- ✓ On hits to the **OUTFIELD**, you come **INSIDE** the diamond to the working area, pivot and pick up your base runners.

**REMEMBER: Inside-Out, Outside-In**



## REMEMBER BASE UMPIRES: ANGLE OVER DISTANCE

- ✓ **Get in the right position** to make the call.
  - Ideally, about 10 feet away from the play and at a 90 degree angle to the throw and/or tag.
  
- ✓ But there is only one of you out there; you can't be everywhere at once.
  - You will have to make calls at first base when you are in C position –**about 75 feet away!**
  
- ✓ **Get the right angle on the play** –that is more important than getting close.
  - The right angle is where your view isn't obstructed by any other players, and where you can see the tag.
  - Try not to get "straight-lined" by runners.
  
- ✓ **Keep your chest to the ball** – on an infield hit, keep your chest to the ball, and position yourself to make the call to the base where the call will need to be made.



## TAG OR NO TAG?

- ✓ Determining a **tag or no-tag** is a matter of doing these things:
  - **Moving into position** to take the play (called "**Bust-to-your-Angle**") and standing still. You will follow the throw with your head, not body. Don't get too close.
  - **Finding the throw** from the fielder.
  - Adjusting to the throw in case it is offline, called "**lean-and-a-look**".
  - **Going to hands-on-knees set** (unless doing a lean-and-a-look) to observe the tag. **DON'T MAKE A CALL WHILE ON THE MOVE.**
  - Seeing the tag by **using the eyes properly** –head still, watch the whole play before you decide.
  - Assuring the requirement of "**firm and secure possession**" has been met –again watch the whole play.
  - Finally, **signal the play as using a proper signaling mechanic and a firm voice.**



## MAKING THE OUT OR SAFE CALL

- ✓ **The umpire's eyes must be** focused on the critical aspects of the tag (force play or not) as it develops.
- ✓ **If the tag is on a base the umpire's eyes will focus on the bag and the feet of the fielder and runner as he arrives.** The arrival of the ball will be clearly seen in the peripheral vision.
  - So don't be too close; you won't see the ball.
- ✓ **If the tag is on the runner's body then the umpire's eyes will focus on the glove of the fielder.** The glove will direct your eyes to the runner.
- ✓ Now the umpire can complete the first part of the call process ...  
**YES a tag took place, or NO a tag did not take place.**
  - If the call is **NO** then the umpire will signal **"SAFE"**.
  - If the call is **YES** the umpire must then bring his eyes to the glove and determine if the possession of the ball is **"firm and secure."** Only when he sees this will he signal **"OUT"**.



## EIGHT BASE RUNNER SCENARIOS

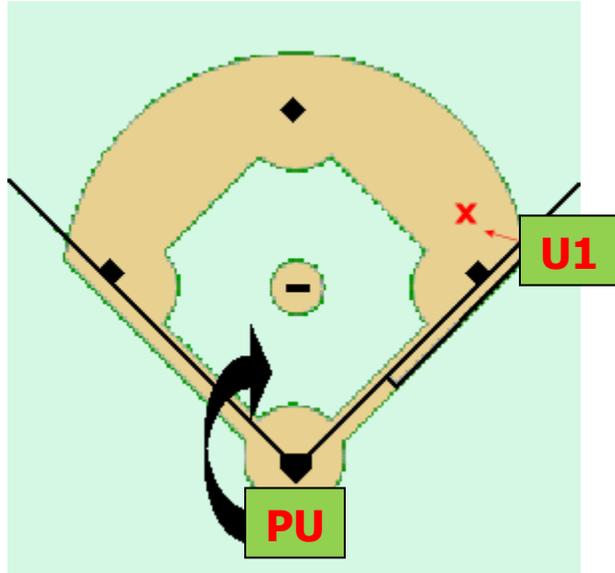
Now we look at each of the eight base-runner scenarios, one-by-one:

1. No runners on base
2. Runner on first (**R1**)
3. Runner on second (**R2**)
4. Runner on third (**R3**)
5. Runners on first and second (**R1, R2**)
6. Runners on first and third (**R1, R3**)
7. Runners on second and third (**R2, R3**)
8. Bases loaded (**R1, R2, R3**)



## NO RUNNERS ON BASE

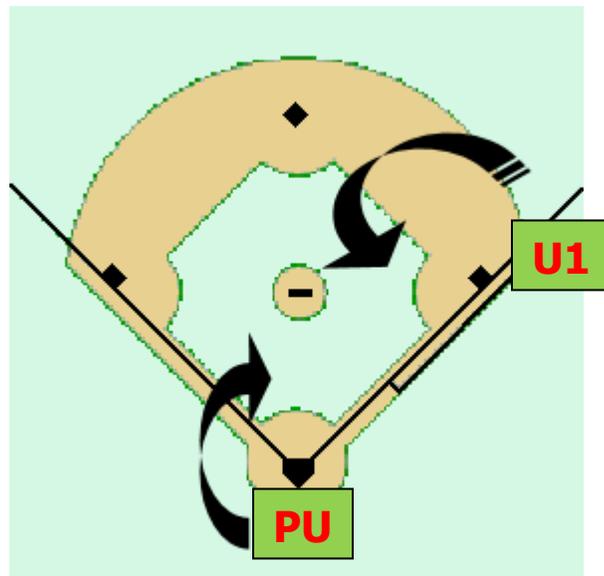
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **A**. On hit, break to sweet spot for play at 1B.
- ✓ On overthrows at 1B, watch for ball out of play.
- ✓ If BR continues beyond 1B, break inside and stay with the BR.
- ✓ Be sure to **see all base touches.**



## Ball to the Outfield:

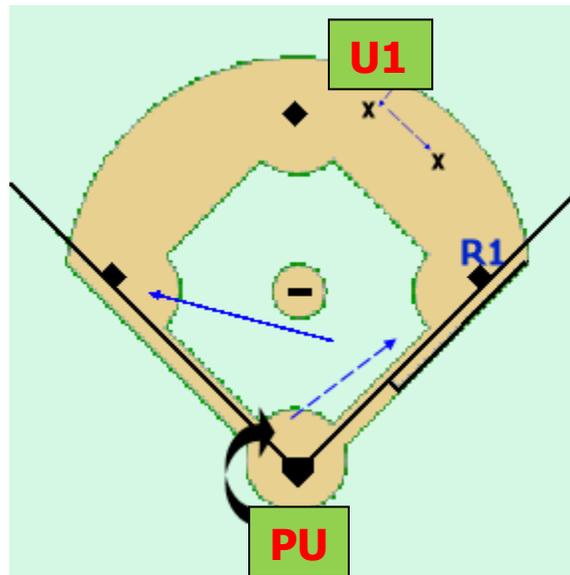


- ✓ Break inside and pivot in the working area; pick up the ball but watch 1B for base touch.
- ✓ You have **ALL** bases except home; stay with the BR if he advances beyond 1B.
- ✓ Your primary responsibility is BR, but from the corner of your eye **always know where the ball is** – this lets you read the play as it develops.
- ✓ Take BR all the way to 3B, then release.



## RUNNER R1 (1ST/3RD)

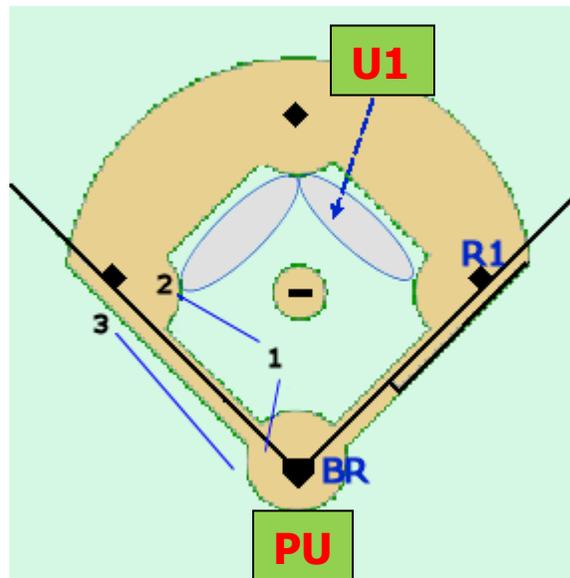
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **B**. On hit, slide in your range to sweet spot; the play could be at 1B or 2B, so read the play and be in position.
- ✓ Be alert to the double play.
- ✓ Be sure to see all base touches.
- ✓ Watch for obstruction of the BR rounding 1B.



## Ball to the Outfield:

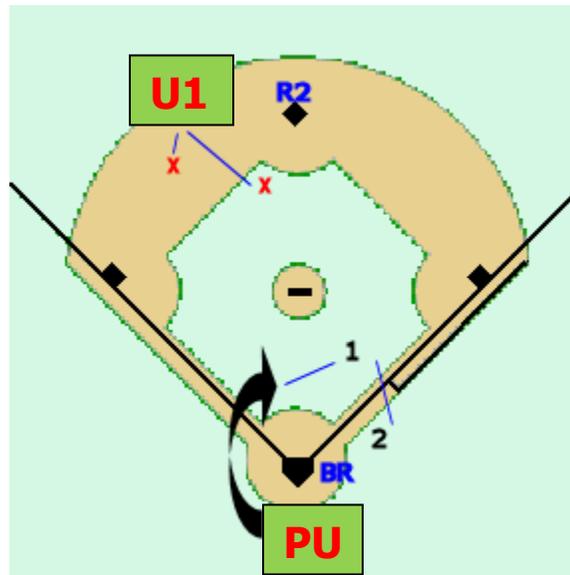


- ✓ Break inside to the working area, pivot.
- ✓ Pick up the ball and stay read the play as the ball returns to the infield. **Follow the ball to the play. Read and react.**
- ✓ If the ball is caught, look **immediately** at R1 to see tag-up if the runner advances.
- ✓ If R1 advances to 3B, **PU** covers 3B and Home (**U1** stays with BR).



## RUNNER R2

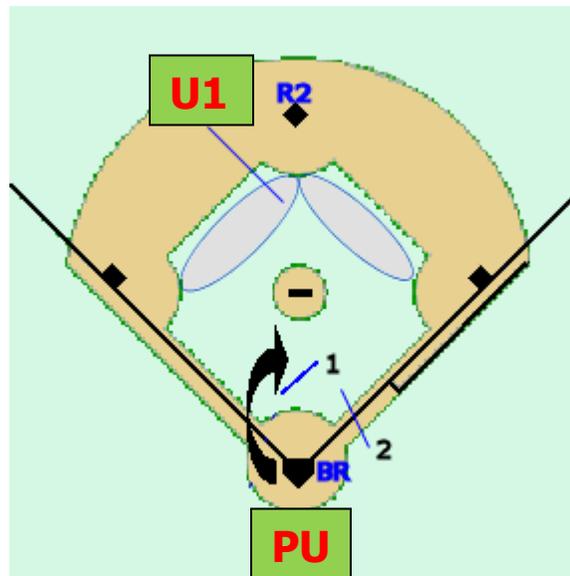
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **C**. Read and react, follow ball to play.
- ✓ If at 1B, take a few steps in and set for call.
- ✓ If play is on R2 (either advancing, or returning to 2B), pick up ball and set for play. Watch for obstruction.
- ✓ If a caught line drive, look **immediately** at R2 for the pick-off play – **OR**, for tag-up if R2 advances.



## Ball to the Outfield:

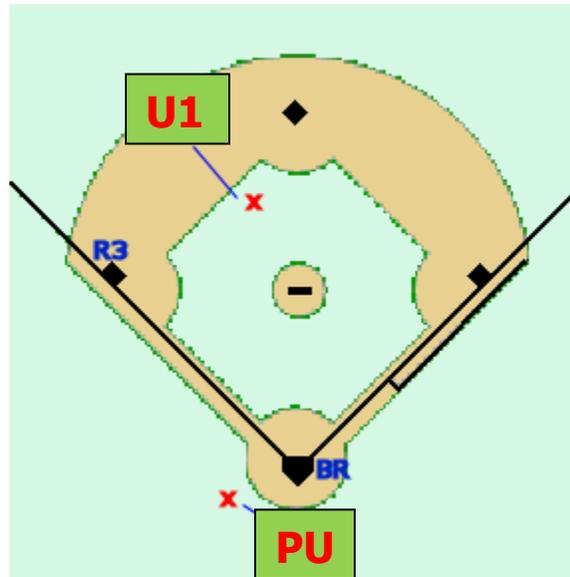


- ✓ Break inside, pivot, and pick up the ball.
- ✓ If caught, look at R2 to ensure he tags up before advancing.
- ✓ If not caught fly, **read and react**. Slide in your working area and stay with the ball as it returns to the infield.
- ✓ After R2 passes 3B, release R2 to PU and pick up the BR.



## RUNNER R3

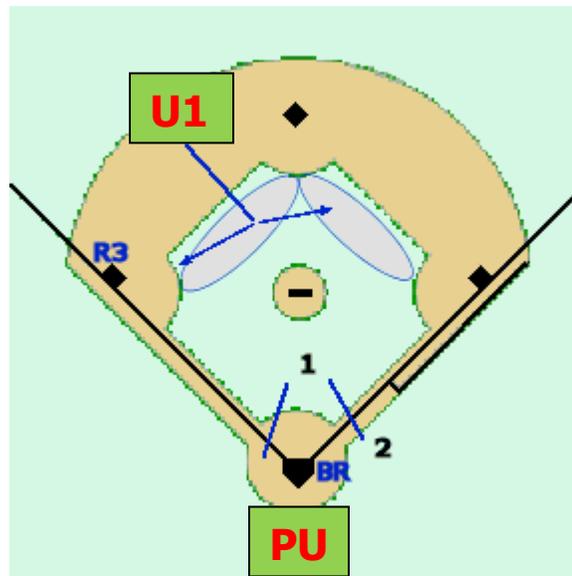
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **C**. Take steps toward 1B and set for call, AND, sneak a look at R3 to see if he is going.
- ✓ Follow ball to the play. If caught line drive, look **immediately** at R3 for tag up or pick off.
- ✓ If BR breaks for 2B trying to draw the throw, allowing R3 to steal home, stay with the ball and know where your runners are. Stay with BR and let PU handle R3.



## Ball to the Outfield:

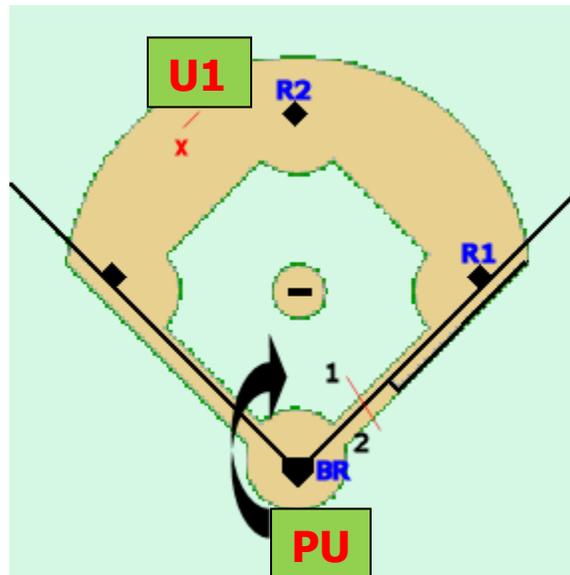


- ✓ Break inside, pick up the ball; keep the ball in the corner of your eye, but focus on the runners.
- ✓ **See all base touches** and watch for obstruction.
- ✓ On caught fly ball, look immediately at R3 to see the tag up.
- ✓ If not caught, release R3 and focus on the BR. You have the BR all the way to 3B.



## RUNNERS R1, R2

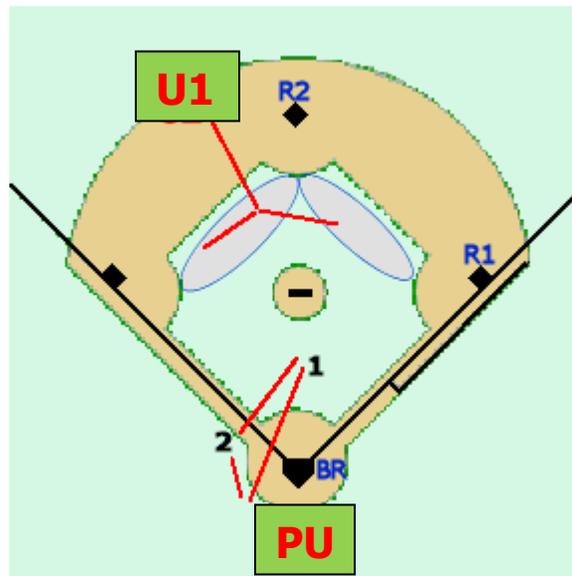
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **C**. You have forces at all bases, so read and react –and follow the ball to the play.
- ✓ Be alert for double play.
- ✓ On a caught line drive, look **immediately** at runners for tag-up and pick-off plays.
- ✓ Remember that with fewer than two outs, R1, R2 is an **infield fly situation**. If pop-up to infield, point and call **"Infield fly ... batter out."**



## Ball to the Outfield:

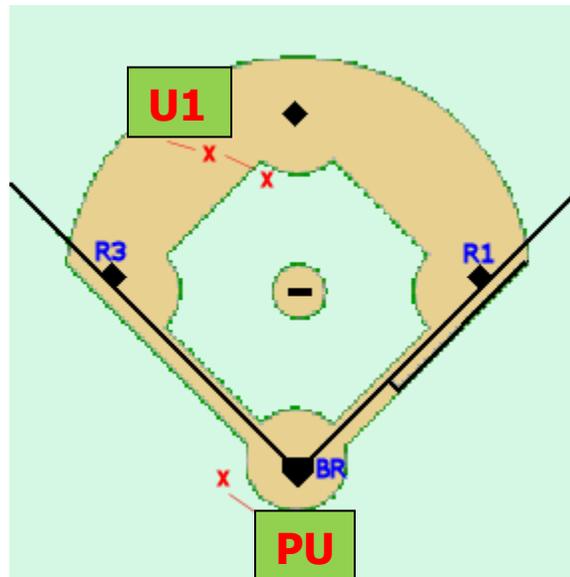


- ✓ Break inside, pivot, and pick up the ball so you can see runners and still know where the ball is.
- ✓ If caught fly ball, look **immediately** to see that runners tag up before advancing.
- ✓ If not caught, track the ball – read and react. **You have all runners at all bases.**



## RUNNERS R1, R3

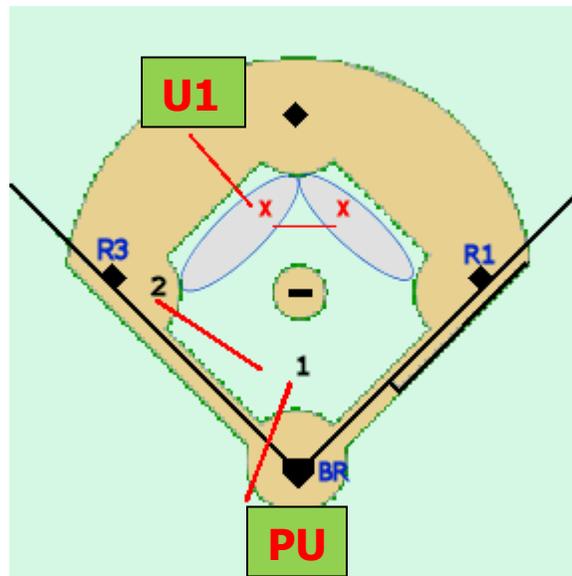
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **C**. Be flexible. Take a couple of steps and get set for the play at 1B. However, the play could just as easily go to 2B (on R1).
- ✓ Stay with the ball, then read and react and follow the ball from the first to the next play.
- ✓ If it's a caught line drive, **immediately** look at both runners to see a tag up or pick-off play. If you have agreed with your partner that PU has the tag-up at 3B, then focus on R1.



## Ball to the Outfield:

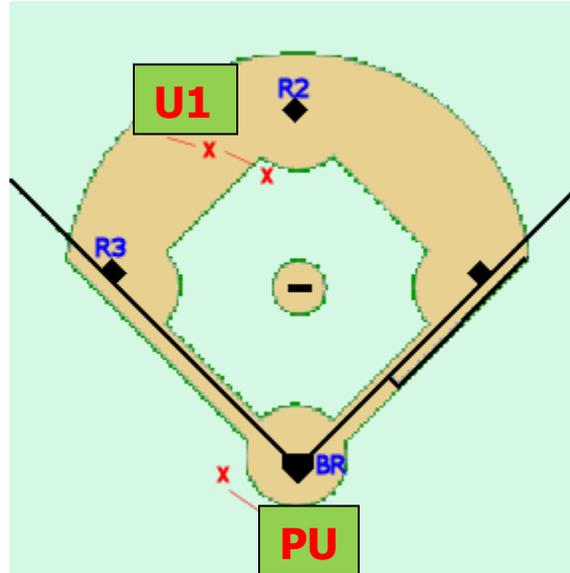


- ✓ Break inside, pivot, pick up the ball; read and react.
- ✓ If a caught fly ball, look **immediately** at R1 to ensure he tags up before trying to advance to 2B. PU has the tag-up on R3.
- ✓ If the ball to the outfield is not a caught fly ball, forget about R3. Pick up the ball, watch all runners (R1 and BR) touch bases, then read and react to the ball coming back to the infield.



## RUNNERS R2, R3

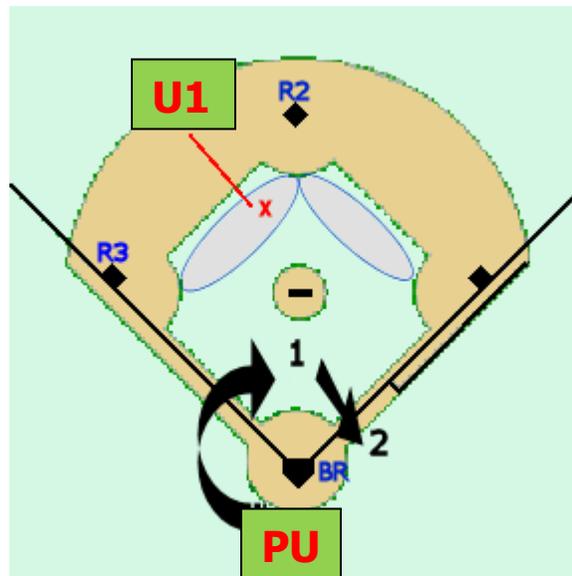
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **C**. No force, so your first move should be toward 1B. However, watch for snap throws on R2 and R3 if they have moved off their bases.
- ✓ If play does go to 1B, expect R2 and R3 to advance, so follow the ball to the next play.
- ✓ If a caught line drive, look at R2 to see a tag up. With R2/R3, you have the tag up on R2 while PU has the tag up on R3.



## Ball to the Outfield:

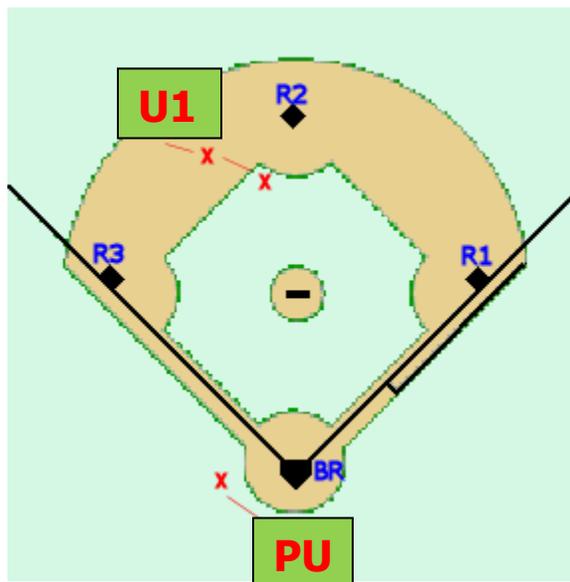


- ✓ Break inside and pivot. Pick up the ball and read the play as you follow the ball back to the infield.
- ✓ If ball is caught, look at R2 for the tag-up. PU has the tag-up at 3B.
- ✓ If ball is not caught, release R3 to PU and concentrate on R2 and BR. Be sure to see all base touches.



## RUNNERS R1, R2, R3

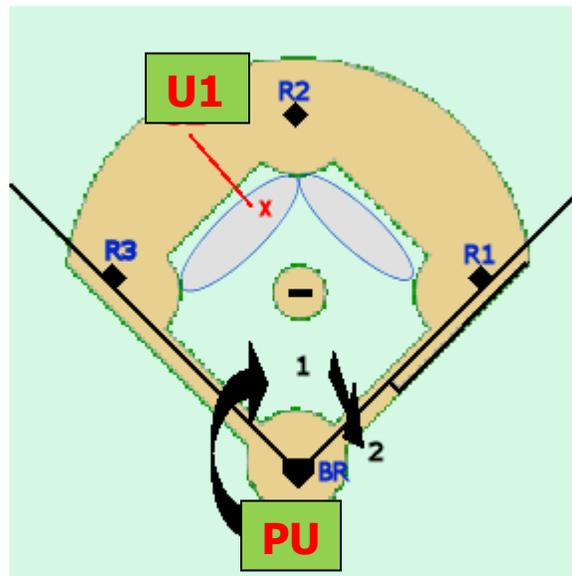
### Ball to the Infield:



- ✓ **U1** starts in **C**. Pick up the ball immediately and follow it to the play. We have forces at all bases, so the ball could go anywhere.
- ✓ Be alert for double play. Stay with the ball and stay out of the way.
- ✓ If a caught line drive, look **immediately** for the snap throw on R1 or R2.
- ✓ If ball is mishandled and gets through the infield, come inside and pivot.



## Ball to the Outfield:



- ✓ Break inside and pivot. Pick up the ball and move to a spot to you see R1 and R2 for tag-ups if the fly ball is caught.
- ✓ If no catch, pick up the ball coming back to the infield. **Stay with the ball**, and stay out of the way.
- ✓ See all base-touches. This is **very** important. With bases loaded, everyone is forced.



## APPEALS

- ✓ An **appeal** is when a fielder claims a violation of the rules by the offensive team. There are some violations that an umpire ignores unless a defensive player appeals. These are the most common:
  - ✓ Failing to tag up when required.
  - ✓ Failing to touch a base; failing to touch home plate.
  - ✓ Batting out of order (Manager's appeal).
  - ✓ **Appeals must be made while the ball is in play (live ball).**
  - ✓ Fielder must either **tag the offending runner** with the ball, or **touch the base** where the violation occurred with ball in hand.
  - ✓ The appeal must be obvious; no "accidental appeals". This is especially important at 1B, where runner is presumed to have touched the base.
  - ✓ **Defense loses the right to appeal after a pitch, any play, or once the defense leaves the field of play.**



## THE UMPIRE PRE-GAME MEETING

- ✓ Twenty minutes to game time, the umpires meet. This is extremely important.
- ✓ Go over the division of responsibility to ensure you're both on the same page. Cover fair/foul and catch/no-catch. Discuss PU coverage of 3B on the 1st-to-3rd, and situations where PU has the tag-up on R3.
- ✓ Discuss handling overthrows out of play at 1B and 3B.
- ✓ Go over the ground rules.
- ✓ Go over your umpire signals and prompt to remember eye contact and signals on every new batter.
- ✓ Discuss taking balls challenging the line in the infield to the cut or to the bag.
- ✓ Discuss if Field Umpires are going out on flyball coverages or if PU has all flyballs.
- ✓ Discuss handling of problem calls and getting help.



## THE PRE-GAME MEETING WITH MANAGERS

- ✓ Ten minutes before the game time, umpires proceed to home plate and call the team managers to home plate for the pre-game meeting (2 minutes).
- ✓ Ask coaches to confirm that all players are properly equipped, and that all equipment is regulation.
- ✓ Go over ground rules; time limits; requesting and being granted time; and out of play boundary areas if applicable.
- ✓ Clarify special league rules.
- ✓ Collect and verify lineups per division regulations.
- ✓ Ask for questions.



## UMPIRE SIGNS & SIGNALS

- ✓ Communicating with you partner is critically important; learn and use the following guidelines:
  - PU gives the signals; U1 flashes back
  - Make eye contact with your partner at every new batter, and whenever the situation changes (e.g., a steal)
  - **Learn and use the following signals:**
    - Number of outs, if any
    - Infield Fly situation, if applicable
    - Rotation or Coverage Area (PU Staying home while U1 has all bases)
    - Good Call
    - I need help / I have information for you



## PROBLEM CALLS & GETTING HELP

- ✓ Our main goal is to get the call right. If you make a mistake, don't worry. If you can correct it, do so. If you can't, then learn from it and move on.
- ✓ If for any reason you are less than 100% sure about a call you've made, get help. **This is up to you.**
- ✓ If you see something that your partner might have missed, offer help. This is up to him.
- ✓ **Do NOT** let managers or coaches argue judgment calls; **Do NOT** allow managers to charge the field.
- ✓ However, managers can legitimately question and appeal an error in the application of a rule.
- ✓ **Do NOT** allow arguing, rudeness, or unsportsmanlike conduct. **You have the authority** to eject players or coaches. **Use that power sparingly, but use it if you must.**



## COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

1. Tie goes to the runner. (No such thing as a tie)
2. Ball hits the plate/foul ball. (Plate is in fair territory)
3. Hands are part of the bat. (Hands are not made of wood or aluminum)
4. Batter-runner turns left after overrunning first base, is out.  
(Must make an attempt toward second)
5. Out if you carry the bat while running. (Only if it interferes with the play)
6. Runner must slide. Not True! (Must avoid fielder with the ball)
7. Batter Runner may over run first on a walk. (No BB, Yes SB)
8. Ball four pitch goes out of play. Batter and runners gets 2 bases. (Only one)
9. Pitch hits batter in strike zone (HBP). (Dead ball, strike, if 3<sup>rd</sup> strike batter is out)
10. Runner must tag up after catch. (Tag on first touch)
11. Runner is out if running out of the baseline.  
(Runner makes own baseline until the fielder has the ball)
12. Batted ball hits batter in fair territory in the box, the batter is out. (Foul ball)
13. Batted ball hits runner off the base, the runner is always out.  
(Before passing a fielder, yes, after passing a fielder, not necessarily)
14. Runner out for running outside 3 foot lane.  
(Only meaningful if runner interferes with fielder taking the throw at first base)
15. Overthrow (1 plus 1) base going to plus 1.  
(2 bases from where runners were at the release of the throw)
16. Catch. (He had the ball long enough).  
(Control of the ball in the glove or hand & release was voluntary or could have been)
17. Umpire must make the call quick! (Must wait until the play is "totally" over)
18. Coaches know all the rules. (No one knows all the rules)
19. Umpires are expected to be perfect at the start of the game and get better with each call. (Absolutely true and expected)



## Warnings / Bench Restrictions / Ejections

Know and understand your rules for the division of the game you are umpiring. Rules on behavior from players and coaches remain the same in all levels of play.

### ISSUING WARNINGS

Warnings may be issued for conduct or actions deemed by the umpire as unsafe, inappropriate. Behavior of such can be, but are not limited to:

- Removal of a helmet while on the playing field. (This includes foul territories)
- Arguing Balls and Strikes
- Throwing Bats
- Intentionally throwing at batters (Can warn both teams)
- Language or behaviors that show disapproval of calls directed towards umpires.
- Taunting, Chanting, or anything deemed as a distraction made from one team towards another.
- Team fans yelling insults or displeasure to umpires. The umpire shall inform the head coach of the issue and allow them to control the situation.

Only one warning shall be issued to the team on the subject. Any subsequent issues result in a penalty of Bench Restriction or Ejection.

### BENCH RESTRICTIONS

Bench Restrictions apply to Coaches and **not players**. Bench restrictions can be issued for, but not limited to the following actions:

- A repeat of an issue in which a warning has already been issue to the coach.
- During conversation, a coach does not leave the conversation or continues to plead/delay the game while trying to voice his view of a call and has already been directed to return to dugout or coach's box.
- Entering the field without being granted time.
- Coaches yelling or arguing with the opposing coaches either from the field of play or in the dugout.
- Failure of a coach to manage their team stands who continuously yell at



and direct displeasures to umpires. Coach will be Bench Restricted, and Field Duty Officer or League Board member will be called for removal of the fan from the stands. **Umpires do not eject fans.**

## **EJECTIONS**

Ejections will occur when the above actions have been applied without resolution. Ejections will be automatically enforced when. But limited to the following:

- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
  - Verbal – any cussing towards any players, managers, coaches, or umpires.
  - Physical – any contact initiated in a manner that is deemed to be unnecessary, with intent to cause injury, excessive in nature.

## **Warning / Bench Restriction / Ejection Summary**

### **1. Issue a Warning**

- a. Addressing behavior is the warning. “That’s a warning” does not have to be stated.

### **2. Bench Restrict the Coach**

- a. If the Coach repeats behavior that was already addressed, restrict them to the bench.
- b. If a coach was addressed regarding taunting or harassment by a fan and it remains not addressed, Bench restrict the coach and request for a Board Member to remove the unruly fan.

### **3. Eject**

- a. If a Warning and Restriction were issued and a Coaches behavior continues, ejection is warranted.
- b. If a player was warned about a behavior or action such as taunting, or throwing to a batter intentionally, and behavior is repeated, ejection is warranted.
- c. **ANYTIME A PLAYER MAKE PHYSICAL CONTACT IN A MANNER DEEMED UNESSICARY OR WITH INTENT TO INJURE ANOTHER PLAYER, EJECTION IS WARRENTED.**