

Umpire Manual



Plymouth Canton Little League



www.ply-canll.com

INTRODUCTION

This manual has been developed to provide information and instruction applicable to umpiring baseball for Plymouth Canton Little League. This manual provides information on game management, mechanics, communication and rules. This manual does not supercede or replace any Little League International Rules or Regulations.

Plymouth Canton Little League continues to emphasize the no-nonsense 'Zero Tolerance Policy' that reads: "Ensuring a fair, safe, healthy and fun game environment is our top priority. Plymouth Canton Little League has a zero-tolerance policy for arguing judgment calls, umpire abuse or displays of poor sportsmanship. Managers, Coaches, Spectators and/or Players involved in such conduct will immediately be ejected from the game and may be further subject to a Code-of-Conduct review."

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PCLL Umpire Principles

Philosophy

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character."

Authority

Little League International Rule 9.01 states "The league president shall appoint one or more umpires to officiate at each league game. The umpire shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game".

Each umpire is the representative of the league and of Little League International, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager or league officer to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of these rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.

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

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.

All umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit his presence on the field, such as ground crew members, ushers, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc., and (2) any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.

Umpires may order both teams into their dugouts and suspend play until such time as league officials deal with unruly spectators. Failure of league officials to adequately handle an unruly spectator can result in the game remaining suspended until a later date.

Registering

Each umpire must be registered with Plymouth Canton Little League and have received notice of an approved league background check.

Managing Coaches, Parents & Players

Interaction

Umpires should be cordial, respectful and fair at all times. Casual conversation with managers, coaches or players should be kept to a minimum occurrence unless necessary to carry out the duties of officiating.

Conflicts

The key to conflict resolution is to recognize when a conflict is most likely to occur. Conflicts usually occur on close plays, when the game score is close or during blowout games. Remember when making calls it is vital to be in the proper position, wait for the play to end and make a firm call.

As a rule of thumb, to avoid trouble always dress professionally, conduct a pre-game conference, keep calm, be approachable, walk away when your done, follow through on warnings and don't be a tough guy.

There are 5 main reasons a manager will want to discuss a call. They think you missed a play, they misinterpret a rule, to protect/support a player, to bail them out of a mistake they made or they want to impress the crowd. The best way to handle this is to remain calm and let them know you will listen as long as they remain calm and respectful. Listen to them and don't interrupt. If it's a rule interpretation, ask them what rule they are referencing. If it's a judgement call, let them know that and that you are not going to change your call. You can say "In my judgement the call I made was the correct call."

Make-up Calls

This is the simplest and easiest way to lose control of a game. If you make a mistake, do not compound it with a "make-up" call.

Ejections

The last thing any umpire wants to do is eject a spectator, manager, coach or player. However, sometimes it is unavoidable. The keys are not to let things build up. If someone starts to chirp, let it go. If they continue, then react. Let them know that you hear them by giving them a look. Next, you may have to walk over to them and ask them politely to stop. If that doesn't work, let them know that if they continue the behavior, they are subject to removal. If all else fails, remove the offender.

Understand that there are situations where there are automatic ejections. If someone is physical with an umpire or opposing coach/player, profanity or verbal abuse of a player should never be tolerated.

Managing Perception

We all perceive situations differently. Therefore it is important to explain the reason for the calls we as umpires make. If there is a missed tag, interference, obstruction or other unusual plays, it is best to call time and explain the call to each manager. This will avoid any conflicts that would have arisen from the play.

Uniform & Equipment

Umpire agrees to appear for each and every assignment in the prescribed uniform. Each umpire is expected to acquire, repair and maintain at cost such equipment as needed for performance of officiating services. These items shall include but not limited to an official Little League International shirt with umpire patch, gray slacks, non-descript cap and black shoes. Metal cleats are not allowed. Additionally, each plate umpire is to provide their own chest protector, mask, leg guards and other essential equipment.



Game Management

Proper Game Time Management

The objective is to complete 6 innings within 2 hours. You should arrive at field 30 minutes before game time. Use the following tips to stay on time:

- Start the game on time
- Plate umpire announce game time.
- Continually remind coaches to keep catchers geared up unless batting.
- Make the players hustle on and off the field.

Pre-Game Umpire Conference

- Introductions
- Local ground rules
- Fair/Foul coverage
- Catch/No catch responsibility
- Tag-ups/Touches
- Fly balls to outfield
- Fly balls to infield
- Base umpire goes to outfield
- Coverage at 1st and 3rd bases
- Live ball (put back in play after all dead ball situations)
- Fences and trouble spots
- Umpire positioning
- Runners lane violation
- Overthrows and awarding bases
- Infield fly
- Timing plays
- Umpire hand signals
- Inspect equipment in dugouts (safety check)
- Dropped 3rd strike (Major and Junior Leagues)

Equipment Check

Try to check the equipment no later than 20 minutes before game time....if while walking the field teams are warming up in the outfield, alert the coaches that you'll need all the equipment out of the dugouts for your inspection.

- Check helmets for no cracks, alterings (repainted, too many decals)
- Check bats to see they are approved (see Attachment A), have appropriate markings, and have no "major" dents.
- Check catcher's mask/helmet for dangling throat guard
- Check catcher's chest protector to make sure it's the long one for baseball

Pre-Game Umpire/Manager Conference (5 minutes prior to game time)

- Introductions
- Collect, review and confirm line-ups
- Review playing field ground rules

- Insure that all players are properly equipped
- Warm-up pitches. Six New Pitcher & three returning pitcher.
- Keep the catchers geared up unless batting.
- Pinch runner for catchers when there are two outs.
- All non-base coaches shall remain in the dugout until time is called by umpire. Managers may request time, but must wait in the dugout until granted by an umpire.
- Review Time Limits. No new innings after 1 hour and 50 minutes. If an inning is started it must be finished.

Between Innings

The 1st duty of both umpires between innings is to keep the players hustling on and off the field. The umpire should never lay his equipment on the ground between innings. (i.e., mask, chest protector, etc.). Additionally each umpire should:

Plate Umpire

- Get a drink, keep hydrated.
- Get pitch counts from the coaches and record it on the lineup cards.
- Verify scores with each scorekeeper.

Field Umpire

- Get a drink, keep hydrated.
- Get the players on the field.
- Get the pitchers warmed up. Six pitches for a new pitcher and three for a returning pitcher.

Post Game Umpire Conference

- Talk with your partners and critique after every game
- Be positive (do not criticize)
- Be open minded to your partners input
- Review important plays
- Assist with ejection report

Plate Mechanics

Plate Umpire Stance

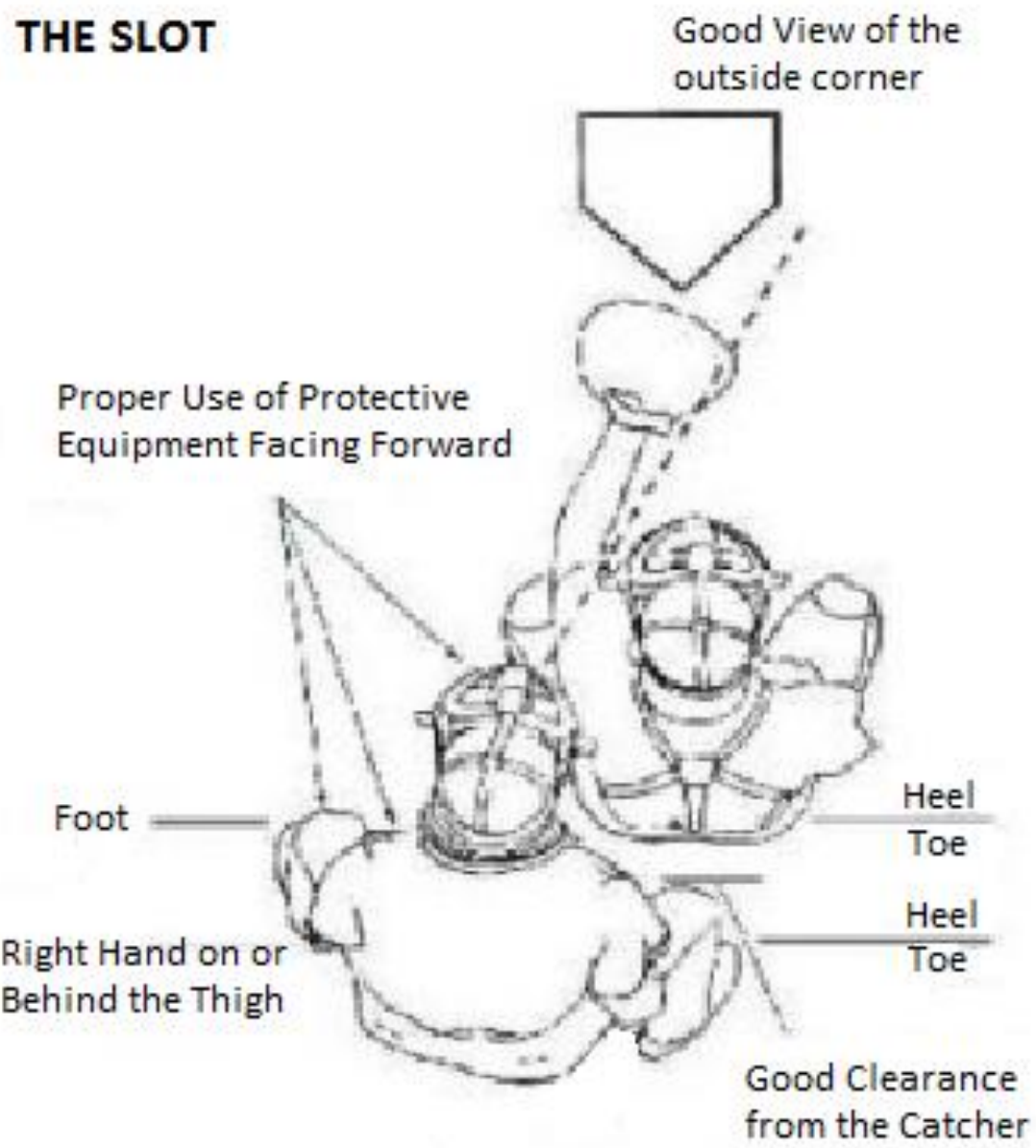
There are three common stances that umpires use behind the plate: the box; the knee; the scissors; and the slot. All of these stances are used in baseball. The effectiveness of the stance depends on the individual. Experiment with these stances and find one that is the most effective and comfortable for you.

The Box Stance - The box stance is the most widely used stance in umpiring. Square up to the plate, one foot slightly forward (towards the batter's back foot), knees flexed, back slightly bent, and completely balanced. This stance can be used over the center of the plate or in the slot (to find the slot position your body so that your nose is centered over the inside edge of the plate). As the pitcher comes forward to deliver the baseball drop smoothly in a crouch. Most umpires crouch to a level that their eyes are at the top of the strike zone. More experienced umpires who use this stance like to stay higher in the zone to prevent being obstructed by the catcher.

The Knee Stance - Occasionally you will find umpires who "work the slot" will kneel down on one knee. The umpire will place his knee on the ground behind the catcher. Tall umpires favor this stance. This stance has the advantage of relieving back pressure and allows the umpire to get low in the zone (especially good for 9 year olds). Disadvantages include more pressure on the legs and decreased mobility.

The Scissors Stance - This stance is more common in professional ranks and less common in the amateurs. Instead of kneeling the umpire extends one leg behind him. Some umpires report neck strain from this stance and it is a difficult stance to master.

The Slot Stance - The slot stance is taught by the Jim Evans Academy of Professional Umpiring. It is basically the box stance except the front foot is one shoe length in front of the foot behind the catcher. The feet are also placed wider apart and is more comfortable. The slot is a very comfortable stance for those umpires that "work the slot."



Tracking

The next part of calling balls and strikes is keeping your head still. Your eyes are like a box camera and a box camera cannot take a good picture of the ball if the box is moving. Many umpires move their head without realizing it. We often have to literally hold our students' heads still because they cannot tell themselves that their head is moving.. The eyeballs (as opposed to the head) follow the ball from the pitcher's hand and see it all of the way into the catcher's mitt.* This is called tracking. It is not easy and it is unlikely that amateurs who have not been specifically schooled in this will do it correctly.

Umpires should snap up to call a strike and stay down to call a ball. On a strike call the voice and hand signal should be synchronized and loud enough so that the dugouts can hear you. On a "ball" umpires should stay down in their stance and say "ball" loud enough for the batter and catcher to hear.

If you know that you missed a pitch, it is obvious that you missed the pitch not because of poor judgement, but because of poor timing. If your judgment were the problem, then you would not know that you missed the pitch – you would think that you got it right. Somehow your timing caused you to miss it. Most often this is caused by mentally calling the pitch before it touches the catchers glove. Make no decision on the pitch until one second after it hits the glove. Do not even have an opinion until this point. Concentration. Concentrate on every pitch. Thinking about anything other than the next pitch is deadly to calling a good game.

Timing

The ball must be seen all the way into the catcher's mitt and then your eyes locked onto it for about one second before you make a decision – ball or strike. Let your "after-vision" make the call for you. See the pitch a second time in your mind's eye. This also helps with seeing the dropped third strike and other weirdness around the plate. Good umpires wait .75 to 1.15 seconds after the ball hits the catcher's glove until they call the pitch.* We call this "timing". As a new umpire, you should be nearer the 1.15 seconds. Good timing is rarely seen in amateur umpires and adopting it is as close as you are going to get in finding a silver bullet in this article. There is probably no one thing that you can do which will immediately improve your performance as quickly as adopting good timing.

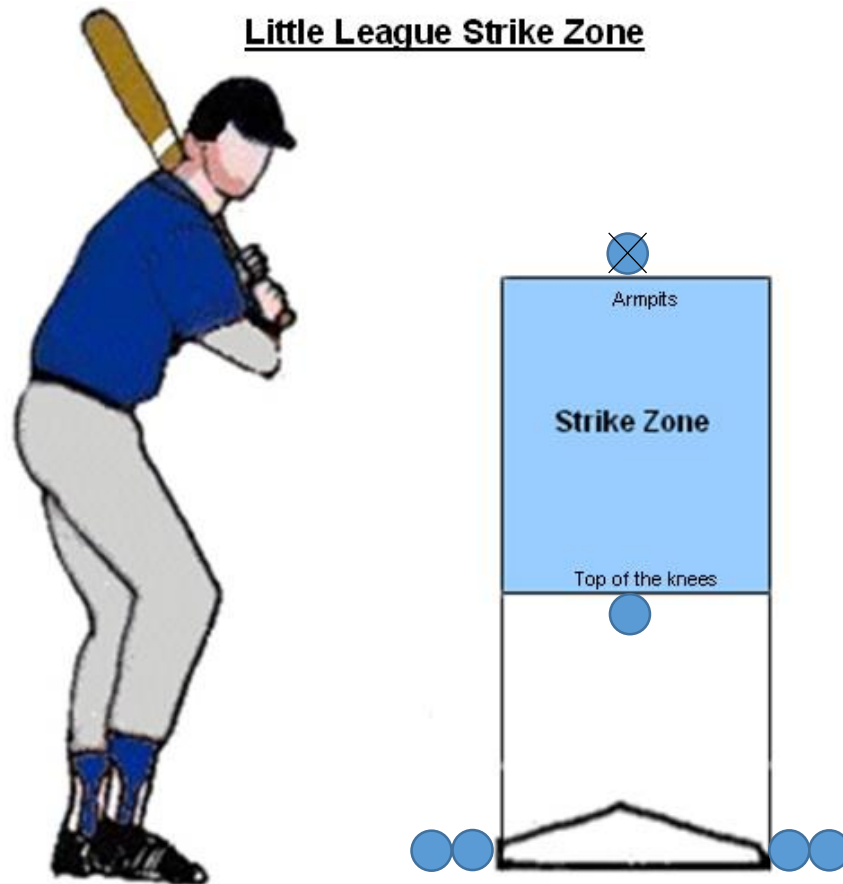
Strike Zone

Little League International Rule 2.00 states "The strike zone is that space over home plate which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance. The umpire shall determine the strike zone according to the batter's usual stance when that batter swings at a pitch."

Little League International Rule 2.00 states "A Strike is a legal pitch which meets any of these conditions –

- (a) Is struck at by the batter and is missed;
- (b) Is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone;
- (c) Is fouled by the batter when there is less than two strikes;
- (d) Is bunted foul (batter is out and ball is dead, if the batter bunts foul on the third strike);
- (e) Touches the batter's person as the batter strikes at it (dead ball);
- (f) Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or
- (g) Becomes a foul tip (ball is live and in play)."

Little League International Rule 2.00 states “A Ball is a pitch which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter. Note: If a pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a “ball.” If such a pitch touches the batter, the batter shall be awarded 1st base. If the batter swings at such a pitch and misses, it is a strike.



Usually, an umpire will allow a little leeway on the strike zone inside/outside edges for Minor & Major games. Allow 1 ball width for Majors and 1 ½ ball width for Minors. Also, allow ½ -1 ball width on the knees. Never allow any additional height.

Calls Behind the Plate

The plate umpire's main responsibility is the batter and pitcher (Balls, strikes, fair/foul balls...) and fly balls to the outfield. However, the plate umpire may be responsible for other situational calls.

- Batted ball is Fair/foul to the bag (unless down third base side – you have the whole line).
- Batted ball hits the runner out of the batter's box– runner is out.
- Obstruction/interference – is the batter running in fair territory? Did the runner throw his elbow at the 1st baseman when running by? Did the runner intentionally step on the 1st baseman's foot (the bag is a foot wide – no reason for this to happen –if it does, eject the runner).
- Dead Ball – if the ball is thrown in the dugout – award second base.
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag. This is the field umpire's call, however they may request your help in making the call.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag that your partner will not be able to see. This is the field umpire's call, however they may request your help in making the call.

Field Mechanics

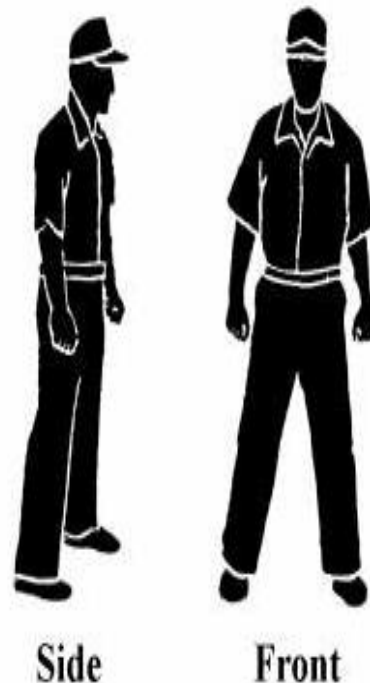
The field umpire has two positions the set and standing position. The set position is the “Hands on knees” position. Before calling any play it is absolutely necessary for you to stop and get set. Do this before the play happens. Never call a play when you are running to get into position, stop and get set, this way your eyes will not be moving and you will take a better picture of the play. Some helpful hints when working the bases:

- Always know where the ball is.
- Never make a call on the move, get set and wait until the play is over before you make the call.
- Tag plays - Do not try to outrun the runner to the base. Know the shortcuts. Work for a 90 degree angle to see the whole play.
- Get as close to the play as possible without interfering.
- Run-downs - The best coverage in a run-down is by both umpires, on each end of the play, if possible. When the situation allows for both umpires to work a run-down, use verbal communication to direct each umpire's coverage. The call is to be made by the umpire who has the runner coming at him. This demonstrates good team work and looks good to everyone. This requires good communication and eye contact.
- Hustle to be in the best position to make all of your calls.

The Set Position

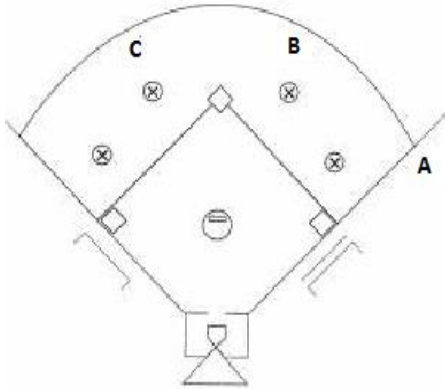


The Standing Position



The 60 Foot Diamond

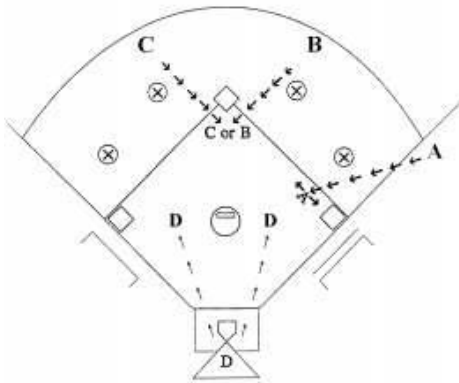
The field umpire has three normal position on the 60 foot diamond prior to the ball being put into play A, B or C as illustrated below:



Position of Field Umpire
When...

- A – Bases Empty
- B – Runner on 1st base
- C – Runner on 2nd base
- C – Runner on 3rd base
- C – Runner on 1st & 2nd base
- C – Runner on 2nd & 3rd base
- C – Runner on 1st & 3rd base
- C – Runner on all bases

Normally, the plate umpire makes the catch/no catch call on a fly ball to the outfield. However if the field umpire feels it will be a diving or shoestring catch, they should signal the plate umpire that they will take the ball and the plate umpire has the runners.



Position of Umpire when ball
is hit to the outfield

Field umpire moves into the
infield and watches the
runners tag bases and pivots
to stay ahead of the runner,
not behind.

Plate umpire moves into the
infield, in the direction of the
ball, only if the base umpire
goes out.

2-Man Mechanics

Plate Umpire Responsibilities...No Runners on base.

- Balls/Strikes
- Fair/foul to the bag (not including the bag) at 1st base, if no runners on; otherwise the whole line.
- Fair/foul down the whole line at third.

Definitions:

“V” - this is the description of an imaginary line being drawn from the plate to the right fielder, and another imaginary line being drawn from the plate to the left fielder.

Situation:

No Runners on base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Run down the 1st base line after the batter-runner if the ball is hit to the infield, go as far as the mound, if the ball gets by the 1st baseman, you need to turn and run to 2nd base. (Since you have the momentum going forward, you are more capable of getting to 2nd since your partner is standing still for the safe/out call at 1st.)

What are you looking for:

- Batted ball is Fair/foul to the bag (unless down third base side – you have the whole line).
- Batted ball hits the runner out of the batter’s box– runner is out.
- Obstruction/interference – is the batter running in fair territory? Did the runner throw his elbow at the 1st baseman when running by? Did the runner intentionally step on the 1st baseman’s foot (the bag is a foot wide – no reason for this to happen –if it does, eject the runner).
- Dead Ball – if the ball is overthrown and goes into the dugout – award second base.
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag that your partner will not be able to see.

Situation:

No Runners on base.....Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Ball hit to outfield- from right fielder to third base foul line.. Run after the ball (in the same direction of the ball), go as far as the mound – or even to the other side of the mound. YELL – “catch” if the ball is caught, “runner” if the ball is not caught. If the ball is not caught, be prepared to run to third for the safe/out call (your partner should be at the plate if the runner continues on).

What are you looking for:

- Catch/no catch – when running after the ball and it is fumbled by the outfielder, it looks better to see the umpire making an effort to see if the ball is caught or not.
- Ball hit to outfield- from right fielder to 1st base line.. Your field umpire should go out after the fly ball. If he does, you need to run to 2nd for the safe/out call. Be prepared for a play at 3rd you need to cover.
- Batter-Runner touching 1st base.
- Safe/out call at second base.
- Safe/out call at third base.

Situation:

Runners on base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Come out from behind the catcher, move down third base line about 6 feet, watching the runner and thrown ball. Once the throw is made and not caught by the 1st baseman, move to third for the call. YELL to your partner that you have third base ("Bill, I have third"). If you see that the runner has the ability to get to home, start moving that direction. YELL "Bill, I'm going home" so that your partner knows that he now has third base responsibility.

What are you looking for:

- Batted ball is Fair/foul.
- Batted ball hits the batter-runner out of the batter's box – runner is out. Watch for the batted ball to hit the runner going to second base.
- Obstruction/interference – on either runner.
- Dead Ball – if the ball is overthrown and goes into the dugout – award second base to batter-runner. Runner on 1st gets third.
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag that your partner can't see.

Situation:

Runners on base.....Ball hit to outfield-right side. .

Action:

Move towards third base watching for the catch and tag-up by runner at 1st base unless the batted ball is near the fair/foul line because it is your responsibility to see if it's fair/foul. If ball is near the line, run down 1st base line for fair/foul call. Then slide back to home. Field Umpire has the runners. Your partner should yell "ball" or "runner" on those fly balls in the "V". If no catch, run to third for a possible play at third, if it looks as though the runner could come home, move back to home YELLing "Bill, I'm going home!".

What are you looking for:

- Get a line on the runner and catch for the purpose of the tag up.
- Catch/no catch, fair/foul on fly balls outside of the "V".
- Batter-Runner touching 1st base.
- Safe/out call at third base.
- Play at the plate

Situation:

Runners on base.....Ball hit to outfield-left side. .

Action:

Move to the right side of the plate area...getting the best view of the catch and tag up of the runner unless the batted ball is near the fair/foul line because it is your responsibility to see if it's fair/foul. If no catch, get down to third for a possible play.

What are you looking for:

- Get a line on the runner and catch for the purpose of the tag up.
- Catch/no catch, fair/foul on fly balls outside of the “V”.
- Batter-Runner touching 1st base.
- Safe/out call at third base.
- Play at the plate

Situation:

Runner on second base or 1st and second base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Stay home! (unless – only runner at second, see last bullet).

What are you looking for:

- Batted ball is Fair/foul – all the way
- Catch/No catch, fair/foul on fly balls outside of the “V”
- Infield Fly rule
- Runners touching third base
- Batted ball hits the batter-runner out of the batter’s box or any runner – runner is out.
- Obstruction/interference – on any runner.
- Dead Ball – if the ball is overthrown and goes into the dugout – award second base to batter-runner. Runner on second, gets home; Runner on 1st gets third base.
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag that your partner can’t see.
- If rundown between second and third (on runner that was at second base), you are responsible to watch batter-runner touch 1st base
- With runner on second only, be prepared to make a call at third base if it is the second play in the infield.

Situation:

Runner on second base or 1st and second base.....Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Move so that you have the best line for the catch and tag-up by runner at second base (glance at 1st for tag up as back up for Field umpire) unless the batted ball is near the fair/foul line because it is your responsibility to see if it’s fair/foul. Your partner should yell “catch” or “runner” on those fly balls. If no catch, watch for runners touching third base as they round for home and check that that touch each base.

What are you looking for:

- Get a line on the runner and the catch for the purpose of the tag up by the runner.
- Runner touching third base.
- Play at the plate.
- Catch/no catch, fair/foul outside of the “V”

Situation:

Runner on Third base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Stay put!

What are you looking for:

- Batted ball is Fair/foul – all the way
- Batted ball hits the batter-runner out of the batter's box – runner is out.
- Watch runner on third touch home.
- Obstruction/interference – on either runner.
- Dead Ball – if the ball is overthrown and goes into the dugout – award second base to batter-runner. Runner on third, gets home.
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag that your partner will not be able to see.

Situation:

Runner on Third base.....Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Move into foul territory towards third base- lining up for the catch and tag-up by runner at third unless the batted ball is near the fair/foul line because it is your responsibility to see if it's fair/foul. Your partner should yell "catch" or "runner" on those fly balls in the "V" unless the fly ball is near the 1st/third baseline then you have the catch. Make sure the runner touches home plate, then move towards third base for a possible play at third by the batter-runner.

What are you looking for:

- Get a line on the runner and the catch for the purpose of the tag up by the runner.
- Catch/no catch, fair/foul outside of the "V".
- Play at the plate on runner coming from third.
- Runner touches home plate.
- Safe/out call at third base if needed on the batter-runner.

Situation:

Runners at 1st and Third base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Stay put!

What are you looking for:

- Batted ball is Fair/foul – all the way
- Batted ball hits the batter-runner out of the batter's box – runner is out.
- Watch runner at third touch home plate.
- Obstruction/interference – on either runner.

- Dead Ball – if the ball is overthrown and goes into the dugout – award second base to batter-runner. Runner on third, gets home.
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag that your partner will not be able to see.

Situation:

Runners at 1st and Third base.....Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Move into foul territory towards third base- lining up for the catch and tag-up by runner at third unless the batted ball is near the fair/foul line because it is your responsibility to see if it's fair/foul. Your partner should yell "catch" or "runner" on those fly balls in the "V" unless the fly ball is near the 1st/third baseline then you have the catch. Make sure the runner touches home plate, then move to third base for a possible play at third by the runner that was on 1st base.

What are you looking for:

- Get a line on the runner and the catch for the purpose of the tag up by the runner.
- Catch/no catch, fair/foul outside of the "V".
- Play at the plate on runner coming from third.
- Runner touches home plate.
- Batter-Runner touching 1st base.
- Safe/out call at third base if needed on the runner at 1st base.

Field Umpire Responsibilities...No Runners on base.

- Check swing
- Batted ball hitting batter
- Catch/no catch if in position 'B' or 'C' within the "V"

Definitions:

"V" - this is the description of an imaginary line being drawn from the plate to the right fielder, and another imaginary line being drawn from the plate to the left fielder.

Pivot – this is where the field umpire starts in "A" position, runs to the cut out between 1st base and the mound, plants the left foot just prior to batter-runner getting to 1st base, then turns his body to the left (so that his shoulders are square with the runner. Watches the runner touch the base, then the umpire will run perpendicular with the path between 1st and second, running in the infield.

Situation:

No Runners on base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Move into fair territory by 3-4 steps to make your safe/out call on the runner.

What are you looking for:

- Batted ball is Fair/foul going over the bag
- Batted ball hits the runner out of the batter's box – runner is out.
- Watch for Obstruction/interference to help plate umpire
- Pulled Foot – if the 1st baseman has to reach for the catch – does his foot come off the bag.
- Swiped Tag – look for a swiped tag

Situation:

No Runners on base....Ball hit to outfield- from right fielder to 3rd base foul line.

Action:

Come into the infield and pivot – watching the batter-runner touch 1st base (your partner will tell you whether the fly ball has been caught or not). Take the runner to second base, the plate umpire will have him at third base (however, be aware that the plate umpire may not be there). If runner continues, it is your responsibility to cover the play at the plate since the plate umpire is at third base.

What are you looking for:

- Touch at 1st base
- Obstruction by 1st baseman.

Situation:

No Runners on base....Ball hit to outfield- from right fielder to 1st base foul line.

Action:

Turn and move down the line to watch for the catch/no catch or fair/foul situation. If the ball is not caught, you are to move to home plate for a possible play there. Plate umpire has the batter-runner into second and third base.

What are you looking for:

- Catch/no catch by right fielder or 1st baseman
- Fair/Foul from 1st base to outfield.

Field Umpire Responsibilities...Runners on base.

Primary responsibility:

- Balks (Junior League only)
- Possible check swings
- Pick off's at 1st/ throw down into second base. (Junior League only)
- Obstruction/interference

Situation:

Runner on 1st base....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Watch where the ball takes you. Watch for the batted ball to hit the runner going to second base.

Ball hit to outfield within the "V". Make the call on catch/no catch. Verbally YELL "catch" (signaling an "out" mechanic) at the time of the catch or "runner" (signaling the "safe" mechanic) if there is no catch. Watch runner touch second base then pick up batter-runner rounding 1st base.

Ball hit to outfield- outside the "V". Move into the best position to hear (or see) for the "catch" to watch the runner leaving 1st base early. Make the safe/out calls at 1st and second base. If runner continues to round second base, watch to make sure he's touched the bag.

What are you looking for:

- Tag ups at 1st base
- Catch/no catch on fly balls in the "V"
- Runner touching second base, glance back to see batter-runner touching 1st base.

Situation:

Runner on second base or 1st and second base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Watch the ball....it will take you to the play. With runner at second only, fade to 1st base side for the safe/out call at 1st base. Plate umpire should move to third for a possible play at third if overthrow into 1st base.

What are you looking for:

- Infield Fly rule
- Batted ball hits the batter-runner out of the batter's box or any runner – runner is out.
- Obstruction/interference – on any runner.
- Rundowns between bases

Situation:

Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Move so that you have the best line for the catch and tag-up by runner at second base (glance at 1st for tag up).. Yell "I have the ball" or "I have the runner" on those fly balls. If no catch, watch for runners touching second then 1st base.

What are you looking for:

- Catch/No catch on fly balls inside of the "V" – watch second base runner tag up.
- Watch runner touch second then watch batter-runner touch 1st base.

Be prepared to move to home if your plate umpire is at third making a call. With multiple runners, Plate Umpire must go home on an overthrow at third and Field Umpire stays with the trailing runner.

Situation:

Runner on Third base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Watch the ball....it will take you to the play. Fade to 1st base side for the safe/out call at 1st base but be aware that there could be a play on the runner stealing for home.

What are you looking for:

- Rundowns between bases

Situation:

Runner on Third base.....Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Move so that you have the best line for the catch and tag-up by runner at second base (glance at 1st for tag up).. Yell "I have the ball" or "I have the runner" on those fly balls. If no catch, watch for runners touching second then 1st base.

What are you looking for:

- Catch/No catch on fly balls inside of the "V".
- Watch batter-runner touch 1st base.

Situation:

Runner on 1st and Third base.....Ball hit to infield.

Action:

Watch the ball....it will take you to the play.

What are you looking for:

- Rundowns between bases

Situation:

Runner on 1st and Third base.....Ball hit to outfield.

Action:

Move so that you have the best line for the catch and tag-up by runner at 1st base. Yell "I have the ball" or "I have the runner" on those fly balls. If no catch, watch for runners touching second then 1st base.

What are you looking for:

- Catch/No catch on fly balls inside of the "V".
- Watch runner touch second base.
- Watch batter-runner touch 1st base.


Game Communication

Calls

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!

These calls communicate what is happening during a game and are intended for everyone to see. Some calls are voice only, some are signal only and some are both voice and signal.

	<p>“Play Ball” Called by the plate umpire only. Starts the game or resumes the game when time is out.</p>
	<p>“Ball” Called while down with no arm signal.</p>
	<p>“Strike” Called after rising up from the squat position. Strikes are called loud enough to be heard by everyone.</p>

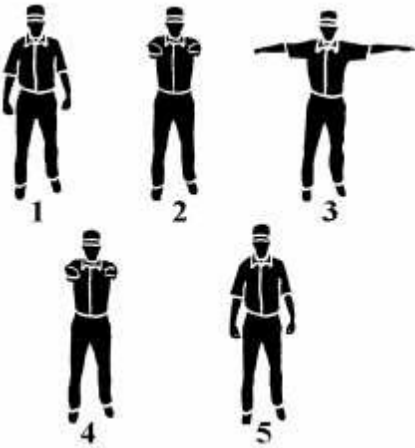


Base Umpire

Plate Umpire

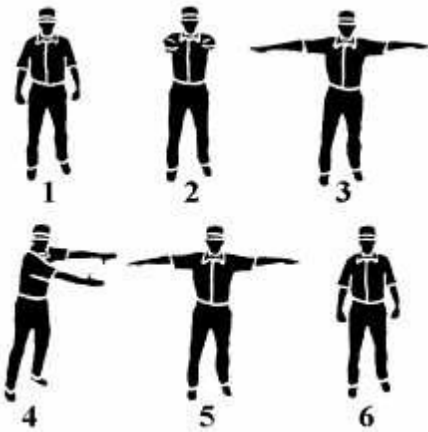
“Time”

Called by any umpire. Called loud and clear.






“Safe”

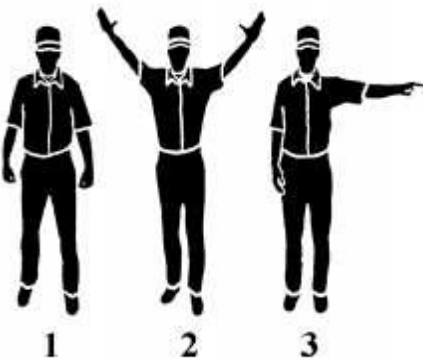
Safe calls originate from the set position. After making the call remain set with eyes on the ball in case there is an immediate play following the safe call.



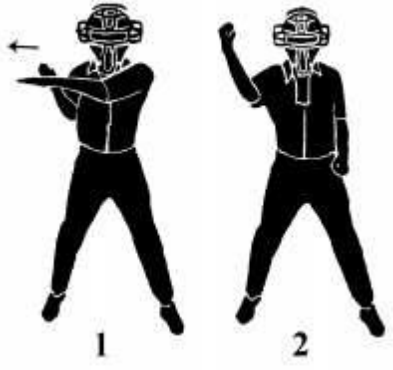
“Safe... off the bag”

Called on a play that the fielder pulls their foot of the base.

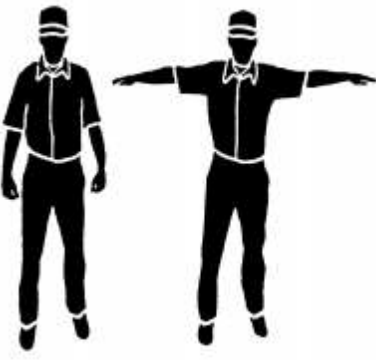
 <p data-bbox="159 499 246 529">Front</p> <p data-bbox="414 499 479 529">Side</p>	<p data-bbox="828 105 909 134">“Out”</p> <p data-bbox="828 142 1339 331">Out calls originate from the set position. Make the call in the standing position. Remember the closer the play the more loud and emphatic the call.</p>
 <p data-bbox="170 1008 186 1037">1</p> <p data-bbox="324 1008 341 1037">2</p> <p data-bbox="503 1008 519 1037">3</p>	<p data-bbox="828 588 1047 617">“Out on the tag”</p> <p data-bbox="828 625 1274 777">Point to spot of the tag and aggressively signal this call. Remember the closer the play the more loud and emphatic the call.</p>
	<p data-bbox="828 1071 966 1100">“Fair Ball”</p> <p data-bbox="828 1108 1323 1260">No voice is used to indicate a fair ball. Indicate by pointing onto the field of play. Emphatically “pump” the signal on close calls.</p>







“Foul”
Raising both arms above the head and make the verbal call. Remember the closer the play the more loud and emphatic the call.






“Foul Tip”
This is a non-verbal call used with a “strike” hand signal.







“No Catch”
Called by either umpire. Call is loud and clear.




 <p style="text-align: center;">Front Side</p>	<p>“That’s a catch” Called by either umpire. Call is loud and clear.</p>
	<p>“Infield Fly” or “Infield Fly if Fair” Called by either umpire. Call is made at the peak height.</p>
	<p>“Time, Interference” Called by either umpire. Called immediately when it happens. The ball is dead and bases may be awarded.</p>
	<p>“That’s Obstruction” Called by either umpire when a play is not being made on a runner. Call loud and clear. Point to the offender and let the play continue. Base awards may be issued after the play is complete and time is called.</p>

	<p>“Time! That’s Obstruction” Called by either umpire when a play is not being made on a runner. Call loud and clear. Base awards may be issued at this time.</p>
	<p>Runner Leaves Early Called by the base umpire. Drop the red flag. This is a non-verbal call. Let play continue and enforce penalty once the play is over.</p>
	<p>Home Run Indicates the ball went over the fence.</p>

Hand Signals (Between Umpires)

Umpires communicate with each other by talking and via non-verbal hand signals. This should be done often to avoid confusion and missed calls. Always echo a signal back to your partner to acknowledge you have received their signal and to confirm you agree. Contact between umpires between innings, should be minimized.

	<p>Infield Fly Situation Indicates 3 different ways to signal your partner that all the Infield Fly conditions exist.</p>
	<p>Number of Outs Done with every new batter.</p>
	<p>What is the Count? Discretely asks your partner to tell you the count.</p>
	<p>The Count Is Discretely tells your partner what the count is.</p>

	<p>Plate Umpire will cover 3rd Indicates to the field umpire that the plate umpire will handle calls at 3rd.</p>
	<p>Plate Umpire Will Stay at Home Indicates to the field umpire that the plate umpire will cover just home plate.</p>
	<p>Check Swing Plate umpire steps out and points to the field umpire and asks, "Did the batter swing".</p>

General Rule Clarifications

Strike Zone: The strike zone is that space over home plate which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance. The umpire shall determine the strike zone according to the batter's usual stance when that batter swings at a pitch."

Points to Remember:

- The strike zone does not change just because the batter squats lower to the ground.
- Consistency, Consistency, Consistency.

Interference: There are four types of interference offensive, defensive, umpire and spectator interference.

Points to Remember:

- On any interference the ball is dead. Rule 2.00
- Interference does not have to be intentional for it to be called.

Obstruction: The act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of a runner..

Points to Remember:

- A fake tag is considered obstruction.
- Contact does not have to be made for obstruction to be called.
- It is obstruction if the runner has to slow down because the 1st baseman is on the bag,

Must-slide Rule: There is no such rule in Little League Baseball. Rule 7.08 defines when a runner is out if the runner is more than 3 feet away from the baseline to avoid being tagged, after touching the base leaves the the baseline (obviously abandoning all effort to touch the next base), the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag or the runner slides head 1st to a bag.

Points to Remember:

- Although a runner is out for sliding into a bag head 1st, it is legal to slide back to a bag that they had previously attained..
- Intentional contact on a fielder with the ball is interference and is automatically a dead ball.

Leaving the Base Early: Rule 7.13 When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave the bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter.

Points to Remember:

- This rule applies to Minor and Major Divisions only.
- Read Rule 7.13 and understand it.
- The Field Umpire shall make the call by dropping a red flag, there is no hand or verbal communication.

Fair/Foul Calls: A fair ball is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and 1st base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past 1st or third base, or that touches 1st on or beyond 1st base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passed out of the playing field in flight.

Points to Remember:

- A ball is in fair territory if any part of it is on or over any part of the foul line.
- A ball which stops rolling before it reaches 1st or third base is judged where it lies when it stops.
- A ball which is touched before it reaches the base is judged in regard to its position when touched.
- A ball which bounds into the outfield past 1st or third is judged relative to the base when it passes the base. If it goes over the base it is fair. If it is in foul territory as it passes the base, it is foul.
- A ball which is batted over the fence is judged according to its position with the foul line when it leaves the field.

Appeals and Protests

Appeals: An appeal is the act of a fielder in claiming a violation of the rules by an offensive team.

Any runner shall be called out on appeal -

- A. After a fly ball is caught the runner fails to retouch the base, before said runner or the base is tagged.
- B. With the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, the runner fails to touch each base in order before said runner, or a missed base, is tagged;
 - 1) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored,
 - 2) When the ball is dead no runner may return to touch a missed base or one abandoned after said runner has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.
- C. The runner overruns or over slides 1st base and fails to return to the base immediately, and said runner or the base is tagged.
- D. The runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to that base, and home base is tagged.

Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the violation occurs during play which ends a half-inning the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field. (The defensive team has left the field when no player remain in fair territory.)

An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play.

Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its 1st appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire. (Intended meaning of the word err is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball out of play: For example, if the pitcher threw to 1st base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.)

Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent fourth out. If the third out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning the defense may elect to take the out that gives it the advantage. For the purposes of this rule, the defensive team has left the field when all players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout.

Points to Remember:

- In order to make any appeal, the ball must be live and in play.
- Any appeal under Rule 7.10 must be made before the next pitch or any play or attempted play.
- If a pitcher balks when making an appeal, such act shall be considered a play. No further appeal will be allowed. (Juniors Only)
- If the pitcher or any member of the defensive team throws the ball out of play when making an appeal, such act shall be considered an attempted play. No further appeal will be allowed.
- An appeal should be clearly intended an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicated an appeal to the umpire.
- On all appeals the ball is live and runners may advance on their own peril.

Protests:

Protest shall be considered only when based on the violation or interpretation of a playing rule or the use of an ineligible player. No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment. Equipment which does not meet specifications must be removed from the game and shall not be the basis for a protest.

The managers of contesting teams only shall have the right to protest a game (or in their absence, coaches). However, the manager or acting manager may not leave the dugout until receiving permission from an umpire.

Protests shall be made as follows:

The protesting manager shall immediately, and before any succeeding play begins, notify the umpire that the game is being played under protests.

Following such notice the umpire shall consult with the associate umpires. If the umpire is convinced that the decision is in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall reverse that decision. If, however, after consultation, the umpire is convinced that the decision is not in conflict with the rules, said umpire shall announce that the game is being played under protest. Failure of the umpire to make such announcement shall not affect the validity of the protest.

Umpire Responsibility: The umpire shall document current game situation (inning, outs, players on base...), document the reason for protest on the lineup card and submit it to the Chief Umpire for the league immediately after the game.

MisUnderstood Rules

1. The hands are considered part of the bat. Rules: 2.00 PERSON, TOUCH, STRIKE (e) and 6.05(f)
2. The batter-runner must turn to his right after over-running 1st base. Rule: 7.08(c and j)
3. If the batter breaks his wrists when swinging, it's a strike. Rule: 2.00 STRIKE.
4. If a batted ball hits the plate 1st it's a foul ball. The plate is in fair territory.
5. The batter cannot be called out for interference if he is in the batter's box. Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 6.06(c)
6. The ball is dead on a foul tip. Rules: 2.00 FOUL-TIP, STRIKE
7. The batter may not switch batter's boxes after two strikes. Rule: 6.06(b)
8. The batter who batted out of order is the person declared out. Rule: 6.07(b, 1)
9. The batter may not overrun 1st base when he gets a base-on-balls. Rule 7.08(c and j)
10. The batter is out if he starts for the dugout before going to 1st after a dropped third strike. Rule: 6.05(c), 6.09(b)
11. If the batter does not pull the bat out of the strike zone while in the bunting position, it's an automatic strike. Rule 2.00 STRIKE
12. The batter is out if a bunted ball hits the ground and bounces back up and hits the bat while the batter is holding the bat. Rules: 6.05(h) and 7.09(b)
13. The batter is out if his foot touches the plate. Rule: 6.06(a)
14. The batter-runner is always out if he runs outside the running lane after a bunted ball. Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 6.05(k), 7.09(k)
15. A runner is out if he slaps hands or high-fives other players, after a homerun is hit over the fence. Rules: 5.02, 7.05(a)
16. Tie goes to the runner. There is no such thing in the world of umpiring. The runner is either out or safe.
17. The runner gets the base he's going to, plus one on a ball thrown out of-play. Rule: 7.05(g)
18. Anytime a coach touches a runner, the runner is out. Rule 7.09(I)
19. Runners may never run the bases in reverse order. Rules: 7.08(I), 7.10(b)
20. The runner must always slide when the play is close. Rule: 7.08(a, 3) this rule does not apply to professionals.
21. The runner is always safe when hit by a batted ball while touching a base. Rules: 5.09(f), 7.08(f)
22. A runner may not steal on a foul tip. Rules: 2.00 FOUL-TIP, STRIKE
23. It is a force out when a runner is called out for not tagging up on a fly ball. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, 4.09
24. An appeal on a runner who missed a base cannot be a force out. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, TAG, 7.08(e), 7.10(b)
25. A runner is out if he runs out of the baseline to avoid a fielder who is fielding a batted ball. Rules: 7.08(a), 7.09(L)
26. Runners may not advance when an infield fly is called. Rules: 2.00 INFIELD-FLY, 6.05(e), 7.10(a)
27. No run can score when a runner is called out for the third out for not tagging up. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, 4.09, 7.10(a)
28. A pitch that bounces to the plate cannot be hit. Rule: 2.00 PITCH.
29. The batter does not get 1st base if hit by a pitch after it bounces. Rules: 2.00 PITCH, 6.08(b).
30. If a fielder holds a fly ball for 2 seconds it's a catch. Rule: 2.00 CATCH
31. You must tag the base with your foot on a force out or appeal. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, PERSON, TAG, 7.08(e)
32. The ball is always immediately dead on a balk. Rule: 8.05 PENALTY
33. If a player's feet are in fair territory when the ball is touched, it is a fair ball. Rule: 2.00 FAIR, FOUL

34. The ball must always be returned to the pitcher before an appeal can be made. Rule: 2.00 APPEAL, 5.11, 7.10
35. With no runners on base, it is a ball if the pitcher starts his windup and then stops. Rule: 2.00 PITCH.
36. The pitcher must come to a set position before a pick-off throw. Rule: 8.05(m)
37. The pitcher must step off the rubber before a pick-off throw. Rule 8.05.
38. If a fielder catches a fly ball and then falls over the fence it is a homerun. Rules: 2.00 CATCH, 6.05(a), 7.04(c)
39. The ball is dead anytime the ball hits an umpire. Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 5.09(b), 5.09(f)
40. The home plate umpire can overrule the other umps at anytime. Rules: 9.02(b, c)

ATTACHMENT A: BAT INFORMATION AND RULES

Rule 1.10 – Baseball

The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat).

Beginning with the 2018 season, non-wood and laminated bats used in the Little League (Majors) and below, Intermediate (50-70) Division, Junior League divisions, and Challenger division shall bear the USA Baseball logo signifying that the bat meets the USABat – 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 $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches for these divisions of play. Bats meeting the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) standard may also be used in the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League divisions. Additional information is available at LittleLeague.org/batinfo.

Minor/Major Divisions:

It shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths ($\frac{15}{16}$) inches in diameter ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed sixteen (16) inches from the small end.

NOTE 1: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

In Summary Approved Bats:

- shall bear the USA Baseball logo
- shall not exceed 33 inches in length
- shall not exceed $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter

Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League:

It shall not be more than 34" inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths ($\frac{15}{16}$) inches in diameter ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end.

NOTE 1: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

NOTE 2: Also, permitted for the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League Division are bats meeting the BBCOR performance standard, and so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

In Summary Approved Bats:

- shall bear the USA Baseball logo or BBCOR (except one piece wood barrel bats) or,
- shall not exceed 34 inches in length
- shall not exceed $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter

