

GENERAL REMINDERS

As an umpire, you should always:

1. Enforce the players code of conduct at all times.
2. Control your own temper - give a calm appearance under all conditions.
3. Be cooperative and understanding.
4. Make prompt decisions, be in front of the play and have the proper position.
5. Assist your partner by watching all plays too, in case he needs assistance.
6. Be sincere - give your best at all times, out hustle the players.
7. Allow only team participants to use bench or dugout.
8. Be flexible when conditions call for flexibility and good common sense.
9. Announce to opposing manager if game is being played under protest and report all details to the area U.I.C.
10. Be proud of your organization and yourself. Do justice to both.

Under no circumstances should Umpires:

1. Remain on or near the field after a game has been completed.
2. Engage in disputed play conversation with spectators or players, other than the manager or coach.
3. State their opinions of the game, the team, the players, the fans, or engage in any unnecessary conversation with anyone.
4. Be careless of their conduct such as smoking between innings, leaning on the backstop or dugout, or associating with fans or photographers, or players.
5. Over-rule their partners decision because the play appeared different from their position.
6. Never touch a player, coach, or manager (with your hands) while in a conversation with them on a ball field.
7. Have their decisions altered or changed by pressures of the managers, players, spectators, or carry the pressures home, or into the next games.
8. Be over-bearing or abuse their authority, or use profane, obscene or vulgar language at anytime.
9. Allow charging by the players.
10. Refer to the rule book during a game.
11. Complain or comment about other umpires work.

NEVER TAKE YOUR EYE OFF THAT BALL.

UMPIRING TIPS FOR AVOIDING CONFLICT

DO's

- *Hustle
- *Know the book
- *Call time out after **EVERY** play
- *Anticipate plays (when working the lower level leagues be in the middle of the field)
- *Be consistent with your strike zone!!! (It's a hitters game, you want players to swing the bat)
- *Check with the team captains for any specific league rules
- *Be confident not arrogant

DON'Ts

- *Don't over interpret the rules
- *Don't make "quick" calls; be sure before making the call
- *Never change a judgment call
- *Don't allow arguing of balls and strikes
- *Don't antagonize players
- *Don't get ejection happy

Know the following rules before ever taking the field:

- *Infield fly
- *Fair vs. foul ball
- *Bases awarded on thrown and batted balls out of play
- *Interference vs. obstruction (especially around 2nd base)
- *Pitching delivery rules

SELECTED DEFINITIONS

1. KNOW THE STRIKE ZONE

"That space over home plate which is between the batter's highest shoulder and the bottom of his front knee when he assumes his natural stance."

A. A Strike is a legal pitch which is:

- (1) Struck at and missed
- (2) In the strike zone = ANY PART OF BALL
- (3) Fouled off
- (4) Pitch legally thrown while batter is out of the box

B. A ball is a legal pitch which does not enter the strike zone AND is not swung at by batter.

2. A LIVE BALL IS A BALL WHICH IS IN PLAY.

3. A DEAD BALL IS A BALL OUT OF PLAY BECAUSE OF A LEGALLY CREATED TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF PLAY.

4. FAIR BALL:

- A. Settles on fair ground.
- B. On or over fair territory when BOUNDING to the outfield past first or third.
- C. Ball judged fair according to position of BALL, not player!

5. FAIR TERRITORY: That part of playing field within, and including, 1st and 3rd base lines, from HOME PLATE TO PLAYING FIELD FENCE AND PERPENDICULAR UPWARDS.

NOTE: ALL FOUL LINES ARE IN FAIR TERRITORY.

6. FORCE PLAY: When a runner legally loses right to occupy a base because the batter became a runner.

7. APPEAL PLAY: ACT OF FIELDER CLAIMING VIOLATION OF THE RULES BY OFFENSIVE TEAM.

8. INFIELD FLY: 1st AND 2nd base occupied, (or 1st, 2nd, 3rd) - No outs or one out: Fair fly ball which can be caught by any fielder with reasonable effort. BATTER IS OUT! NO FORCE! BALL IS LIVE!

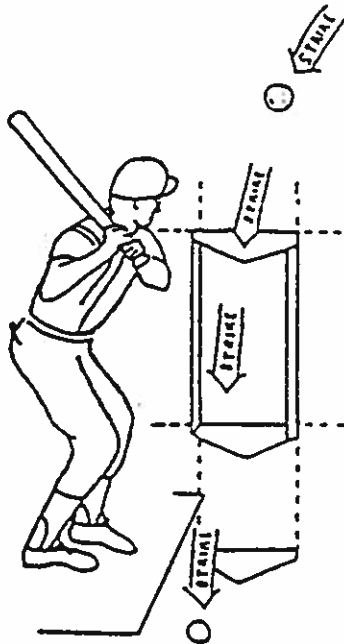
SELECTED DEFINITIONS (CONT.)

9. INTERFERENCE:
- A. OFFENSIVE: By team at bat - interfere with, impede, hinder, confuse any fielder attempting to make a play.
 - B. CATCHER'S OBSTRUCTION: Hinder or prevent a batter from hitting a pitch.
 - C. UMPIRE'S INTERFERENCE:
 - (1) WITH CATCHER
 - (2) WITH BATTED BALL (FIELD UMPIRE)
 - D. SPECTATOR
ON INTERFERENCE, THE BALL IS DEAD.
10. OBSTRUCTION:
The act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner.
11. PITCH: A ball delivered to the batter by pitcher.
12. CATCH: The act of a fielder in getting secure possession, in his hand or glove, of a ball in flight and firmly holding it. He can not use his cap, protector, pocket, or any part of his uniform in getting possession.

WHAT IS A USSSA STRIKE

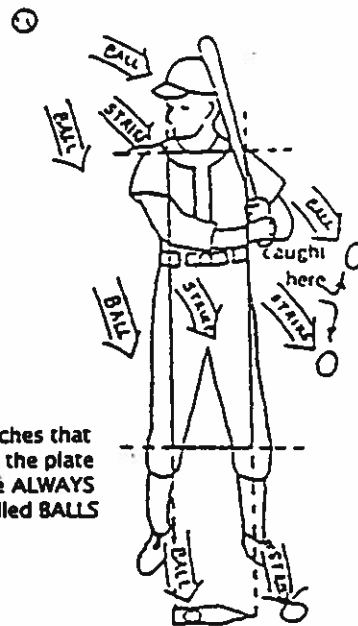
UNITED STATES SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL STRIKE

1. Must have a legal arc - Minimum three (3) feet FROM POINT OF RELEASE
Maximum ten (10) feet FROM THE GROUND
2. Must be delivered at a MODERATE SPEED and UNDERHAND
3. A strike is judged WHEN AND WHERE it crosses the plate.
4. The pitched ball must pass thru the strike zone which is that space over any part of home plate which is between the batter's highest shoulder and front knee when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.



Some part of the legal pitched ball must pass thru this zone to be called a strike

Remember that the position of the batter in the batter's box makes no difference. The plate and batter's natural stance at the plate are the controlling factors.



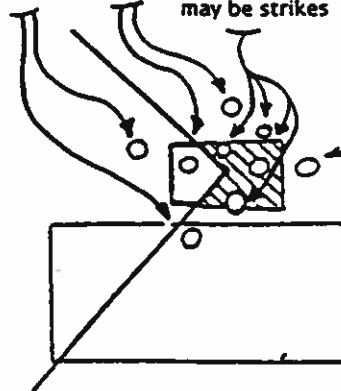
Pitches that hit the plate are ALWAYS called BALLS

Pitches that hit the ground here -

cannot be strikes

may be strikes

probably are not strikes

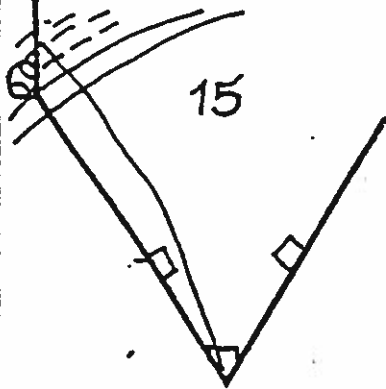
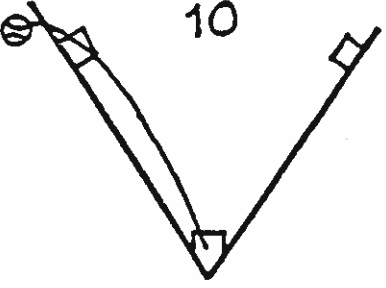
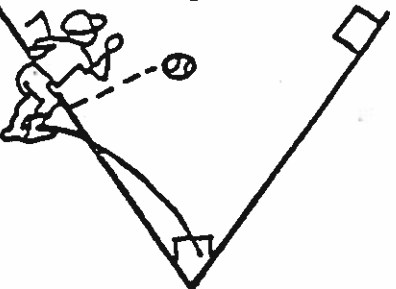
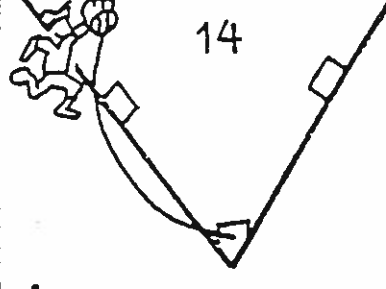
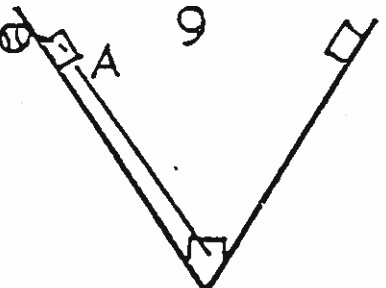
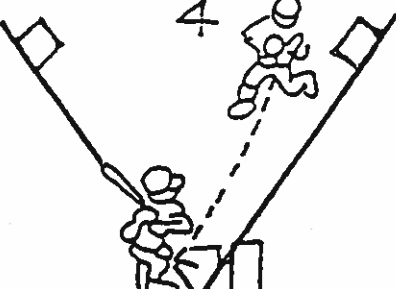
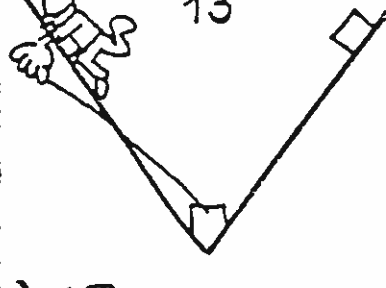
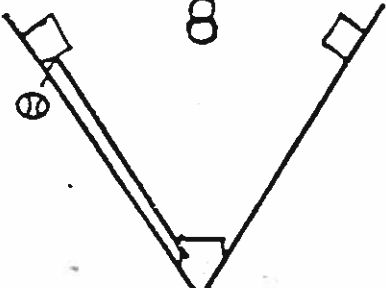
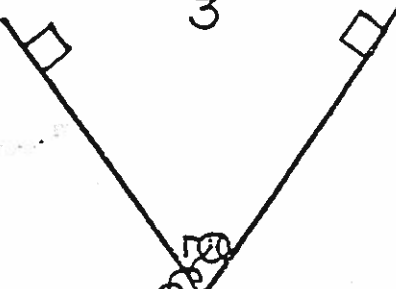
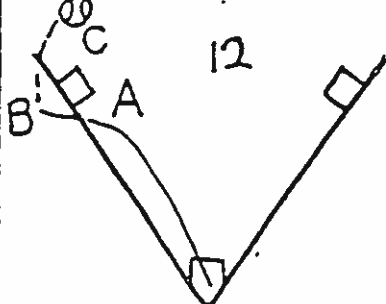
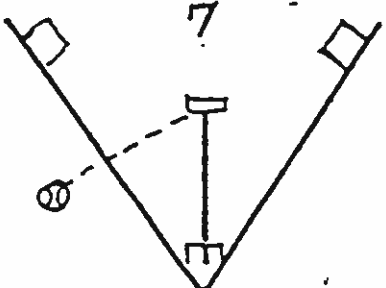
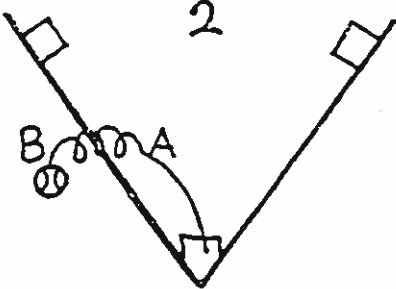
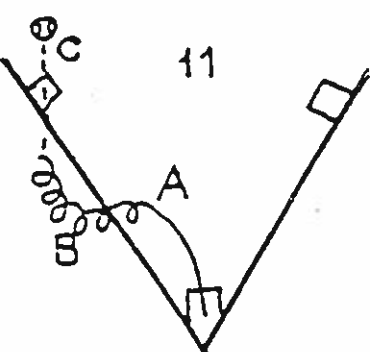
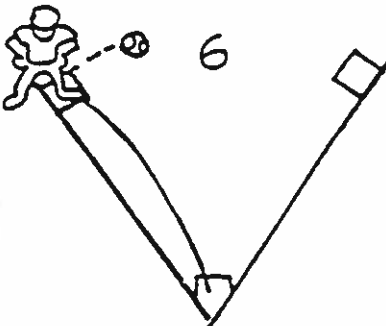
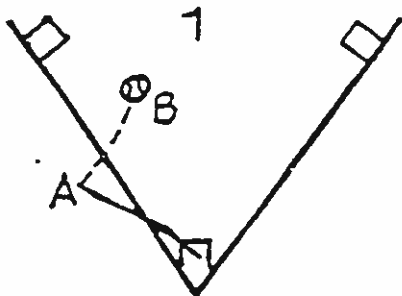


IS IT FAIR OR FOUL? - YOU MAKE THE CALL

A batted ball often bounces funny, and when it does, it eventually must be called fair or foul. The fair-foul rule, perhaps the most basic in the game, is unclear to countless fans. And many who think they know the rule really don't. To clear the confusion, we have devised a "fair-foul" test. Let's see how well you do on it. "Call" the following plays by circling what you consider to be the correct answers. Remember, in each case we're talking about a batted ball.

- 1) See Diagram 1, Next Page. The ball bounces in foul territory at Point A, hits a pebble, bounces into fair territory at Point B and is fielded there. FAIR FOUL
Suppose it isn't fielded at Point B, but comes to rest there. FAIR FOUL
- 2) See Diagram 2, Next Page. The ball hits at Point A in fair territory, but spins into foul territory and comes to rest, or is touched, at Point B. FAIR FOUL
- 3) See Diagram 3, Next Page. The ball hits at Point A in foul territory, spins forward and comes to rest directly on home plate. FAIR FOUL
- 4) See Diagram 4, Next Page. A batted ball hits the batter's leg while he is in the batter's box, bounces into fair territory and is fielded there. FAIR FOUL
- 5) See Diagram 5, Next Page. A runner standing on third leaps into foul territory when a live drive is hit at him. While completely in foul territory the line drive hits his leg and then bounces into fair territory and is fielded there. FAIR FOUL
- 6) See Diagram 6, Next Page. Runner is standing on third, one leg on the base and the other in foul territory. Ground ball hits leg that is on the base. FAIR FOUL
- 7) See Diagram 7, Next Page. A line drive hits the pitcher's rubber without touching a player, careens into foul territory between home and third and bounces into the bleachers. FAIR FOUL
- 8) See Diagram 8, Next Page. Ball rolls directly along the foul line, touches a corner of third base and then rolls foul, never passing the bag. FAIR FOUL
- 9) See Diagram 9, Next Page. Ball bounces in front of third base at Point A, crosses directly over the bag, and lands in foul territory beyond the bag. FAIR FOUL
- 10) See Diagram 10, Next Page. Line drive zooms over third base in fair territory but lands in foul territory beyond the bag. FAIR FOUL
- 11) See Diagram 11, Next Page. Ball hits fair at Point A; spins foul, hits a pebble at Point B, comes back into the diamond, crossing directly over the third base bag and comes to rest at Point C. FAIR FOUL
- 12) See Diagram 12, Next Page. Ball rolls inside the foul line, then at Point A dips into foul territory before reaching the third base bag, but after it passes behind the third base bag, it hits a pebble at Point B and comes back into fair territory again, settling at Point C. (Don't say this is impossible, I've seen it happen) FAIR FOUL
- 13) See Diagram 13, Next Page. Third baseman, standing in fair territory, reaches out into foul territory and touches a line drive which is definitely on the foul side of the line. FAIR FOUL
- 14) See Diagram 14, Next Page. Left fielder goes into foul territory for a fly ball. At the last second the wind carries it into fair territory. While standing in foul territory, he reaches into fair territory to touch the ball. FAIR FOUL
- 15) See Diagram 15, Next Page. Ball hits left field foul pole and bounces into the stands in foul territory. FAIR FOUL

FAIR OR FOUL DIAGRAMS 1 - 15



BATTING OUT OF ORDER

1

The appeal is made before the improper batter completes his turn at bat



Proper batter can take his place in batter's box and assume count

2

If appeal after improper batter completes time at bat, but before next pitch, play or attempted play



Proper batter is called out



Baserunners' advances due to actions of improper batter are nullified



Next batter is one whose name follows that of proper batter called out

3

If appeal made after next pitch, play or attempted play



Improper batter and his actions are legal



All baserunners' advances are legal



The batting order continues with batter following legalized improper batter

NOTE: No baserunner shall be removed from a base to bat in his proper place. He just misses his turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

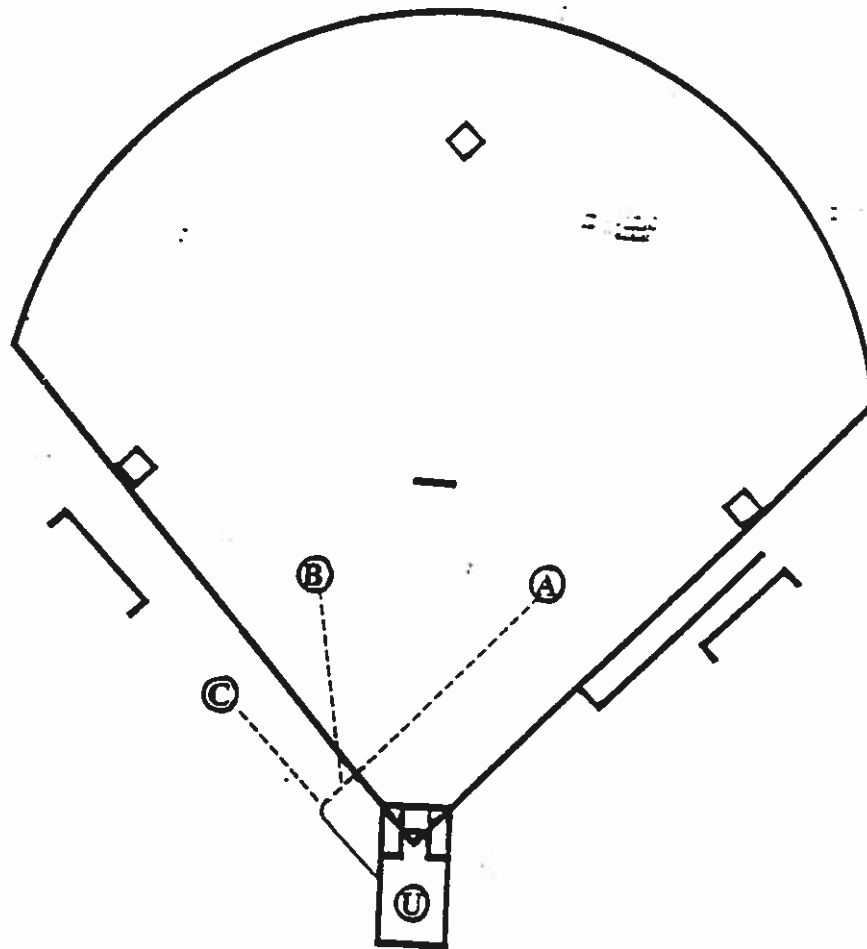
TIPS FOR WORKING THE PLATE

1. Assume a comfortable position behind the catcher.
2. Be relaxed and don't call your pitches too soon.
3. Be consistent with your strike zone.
4. Support all called strikes with a **STRONG** voice especially on second strike.
5. Keep the plate clean and always brush the plate with your back to the infield.
6. Between innings, get away from the plate - avoid problems.
7. Hustle the teams between innings.
8. When calling foul balls use voice and "punching" hand motion.
9. When indicating fair balls, **DO NOT** use voice. Only indicate fair ball with punching hand motion towards fair territory.
10. Don't call ground balls hit along the first or third base foul line fair or foul before they actually are!!
11. When calling "TIME", yell loudly with both hands extended above head. Leave no doubt with your partner.
12. For the "infield fly", call: "INFIELD FLY, BATTERS OUT, IF FAIR".
13. Always know where the ball is at all times.
14. On batted balls, move out in front of, or to either side of, the plate and be ready to assist your base Umpire. Don't interfere with the batter-runner or catcher.
15. The plate Umpire should handle the pre-game discussion and make sure that all ground rules are clearly understood.
16. Don't be too hasty in calling games due to weather conditions. Utilize good judgment.
17. If a game is protested, be sure and notify the other team before proceeding with play.
18. Only the Umpire In-Chief can forfeit a game; however, he should exhaust every means at his command to prevent it.
19. Exercise patience and forbearance in the ejection of players - don't insist on the last word in an argument.
20. Always hustle, be neat, alert, use common sense and command respect.

TIPS FOR WORKING BASES

1. Always keep your eye on the ball - remember a play cannot be made without the ball.
2. Obtain the best angle possible for all plays.
3. Make sure all plays are finished before making your call - avoid common fault of "Young Umpires" by making calls too soon.
4. Make sure fielder has ball under control - get as close to tag play as you can without interfering.
5. On all plays get down low and support your "close" calls with a strong voice.
6. Indicate your out calls with a brisk move of the right arm.
7. Indicate your safe calls with both arms, stretched outward and apart - palms of hands downward.
8. On wide open plays, just indicate safe or out with a mild gesture.
9. Never call a play on the run - it is better to be further away from the play and call it in a still position.
10. The base Umpire calls all trapped balls in the outfield and should make every effort to get as close to the outfielder as possible and obtain the proper angle to see the entire play.
11. Talk to your partner - tell him where you are going, if not the most usual place. (rundowns, outfield flies, home plate, etc.)
12. Always be alert to avoid being hit by batted or thrown balls. Being in an upright position and moving a step forward or backward on each pitch will enable you to keep from being hit.
13. Do not turn your head too quickly on the first part of a possible double play or any other play. Follow the ball.
14. Make sure that the bases are secure and in the proper position.
15. Be ready to assist the plate Umpire with batted balls that hit off a batter's foot.
16. Remember being out of position is inexcusable and never forget that hustle, common sense and mental readiness is always important in good umpiring.

SOFTBALL
UMPIRE MECHANICS
BASIC MECHANICS — ONE (1) MAN SYSTEM



In essence, the truest test of an individual's ability to perform the duties of a slow-pitch softball umpire. Not only is the umpire scrutinized for his judgment, his hustle, and positioning become key factors in his overall performance. The umpire, that institutes all his calls while remaining stationary behind the plate, is in for a long day at the ballpark.

"A" Position of umpire under following circumstances — batter — runner — no one on base, runner on first base.

"B" Position of umpire under following circumstances — runners, first and second base, second base only.

"C" Position of umpire under following circumstances — runners, first and third base, runners, first, second, and third base, third base only.

"A", "B" and "C" are all primary positions. Secondary movements will be dictated by the flow of play. Your ability to hustle and follow the ball now come into existence.

A word of caution; over hustle can tend to create unnecessary problems. Assume the primary position, keep your eyes always on the ball and move with its flight.

"The importance of your knowledge of the rules goes without saying. But you will find your knowledge of the game will play a huge part. Realize game situations and you will react automatically to the proper positioning. Becoming a part of the game, rather than its overseer, will make you a much better umpire."



Washington State Slo-Pitch Umpires Association

**TWO MAN MECHANICS
POSITIONING FOR BASE UMPIRE**

A. No Runners on Base.

Down first baseline, staying one step deeper than the first baseman and entirely in foul territory, so as not to interfere on the ball hit down the first baseline.

B. Runner on First Base.

Base umpire positioned 10 to 12 feet behind pitcher and just to either side.

C. Runners on First and Third only.

Same as Section B.

D. Runner on Third only.

Same as Section B.

E. Runners on First and Second.

Base umpire positioned at second base. It doesn't matter how many outs there are. From this position you should be able to cover any plays that may develop.

F. Runners on First, Second, and Third.

Same as Section E.

G. Runner on Second only.

Same as Section E.

H. Runners on Second and Third only.

Same as Section E.

1. Play Ball:

The plate umpire shall call "PLAY" and simultaneously make a beckoning or pointing motion for the pitcher to deliver the ball.



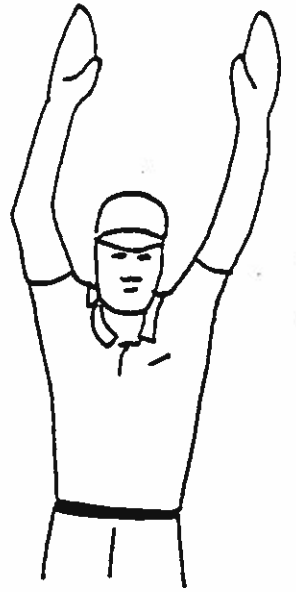
2. ⏸ "Time"

or "Time Out" is the call and signal that must be made

To indicate a suspension of play, the umpire shall call "TIME" and at the same time extend both hands skyward, clearly above his head with the hands open.

The other umpires shall immediately acknowledge the suspension of play, by performing a similar signal.

Plate umpire calls time initially.



3. ⏸ Not To Pitch

is a mixed signal in that it is a call and signal that suspends play but is made while the ball is alive. It is a situation whereby you need action to be taking place but you also need the "timing" mechanism.

Extend the arm directly toward the pitcher with an open palm facing the pitcher, signalling the pitcher to stop.



UMPIRE HAND SIGNALS

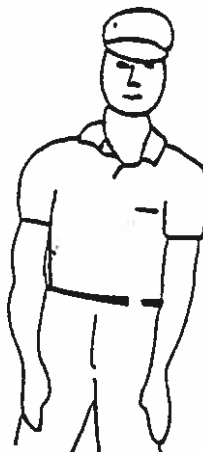
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4. Ball and Strike Calls

Ball and strike calls should be made in such a manner that everyone knows what is going on. Again these are calls performed proportionally.

"Ball"

For the ball call, it is a verbal call that should be heard loud enough for the catcher and batter to hear. No signal is used, however, the plate umpire shall give the verbal call of "BALL" and then add the number.



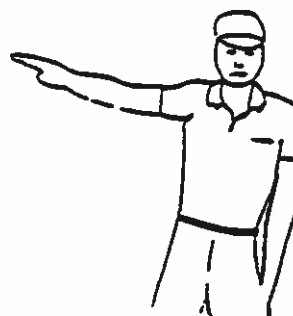
Stand
and
State
"BALL"
(no signal)

"Strike"

The Strike call should be seen and heard, in most cases, by all participants. To indicate that the pitch was a strike the umpire shall raise his right arm upward above the shoulder, and then down to the hammer position, indicating the number of strikes with spread fingers, while at the same instant calling strike (by number) in a clear and decisive voice.



"STRIKE ..



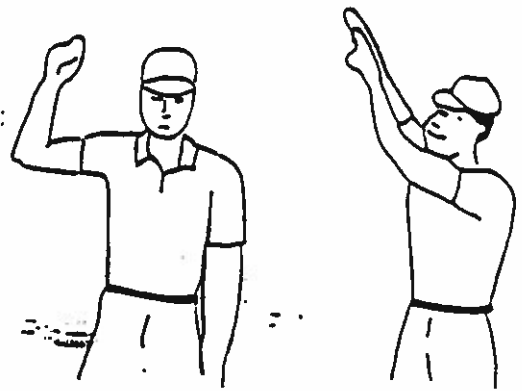
... ONE"
(number
of strikes)

UMPIRE HAND SIGNALS

(Cont'd)

5. Foul Tip

The plate umpire shall first call a strike and then signal that it was a foul tip by extending both arms upward and off to the right of the body. The palm of the right hand will then be glanced off of the back of the left hand.

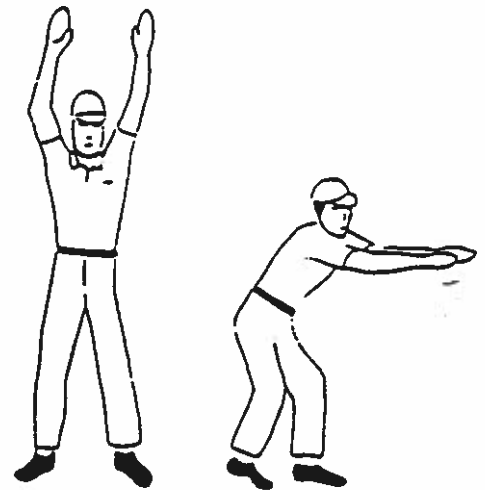


"STRIKE!"

FOUL TIP

6. Foul Ball

On a ball hit sharply down the first or third base line foul the umpire shall first call "TIME" then turn and extend his arms horizontally away from the diamond, according to the direction of the ball, while verbalizing "FOUL BALL" in a manner appropriate to the situation.

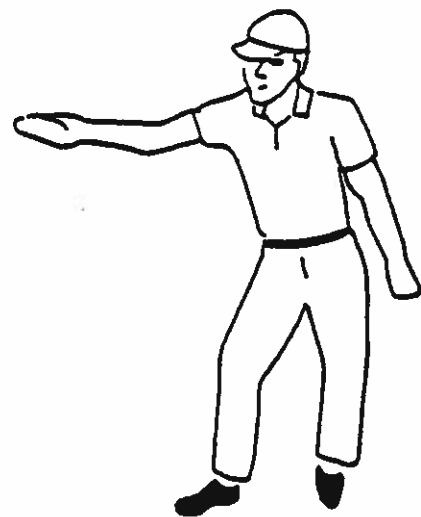


"TIME"

"FOUL BALL"

7. Fair Ball

The plate umpire shall signal by pumping the right arm in towards the infield. There is no verbal call. This is for the guidance of his fellow umpire and the players information.



FAIR BALL

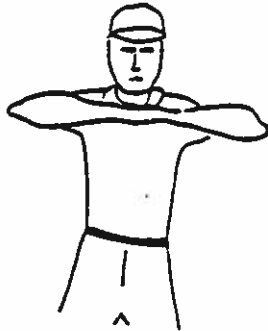
UMPIRE HAND SIGNALS

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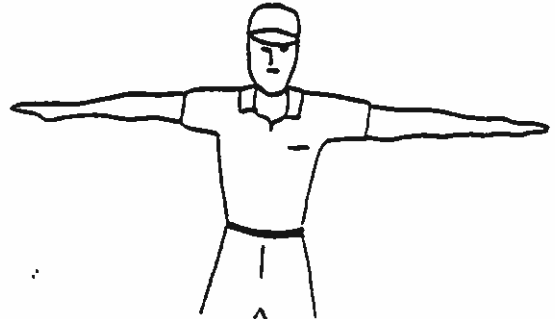
8. "Safe"

To indicate that the base runner is safe (or not out.)

The umpire shall extend both arms out to his sides and to shoulder level with the palms open and facing down towards the ground. A verbal call of "SAFE" is performed simultaneously with the signal.



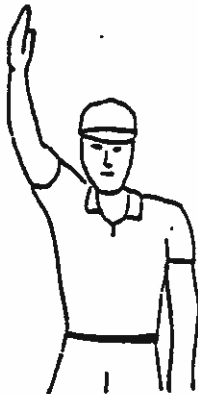
First visual
action for
Safe call



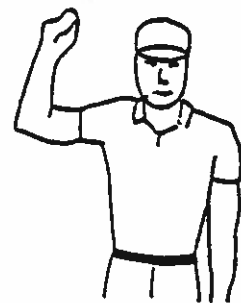
"SAFE"

9. "Out"

The umpire shall raise his right arm (hand open) straight up to a full extension directly above the shoulder and then bring it back down in to the hammer position (right angle) with the fist clenched and verbally call "OUT".



First visual
action for
Out call

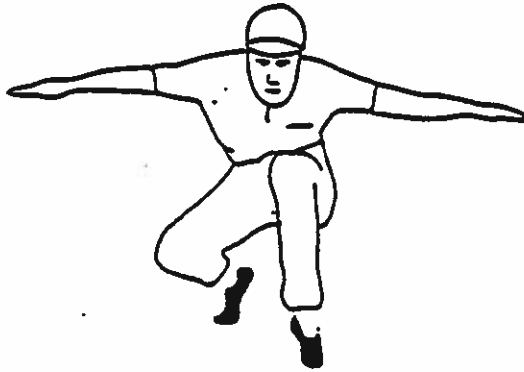


"OUT"

UMPIRE HAND SIGNALS

(Cont'd)

10. **Close Sliding Plays** — If the play is going to be a close sliding play, then the umpire should move in, get down and be as close as possible to eye level, of where the play will occur.



"SAFE"

Once the play occurs, if it is to be a safe call, make the signal and stay with the play.

If it is to be an out call, point at the play and then once you are sure that control of the ball has been established, signal and call "OUT".

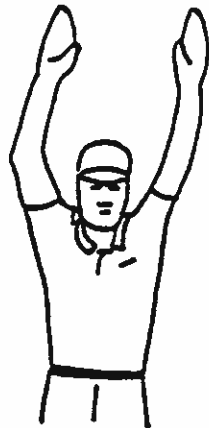


"OUT"

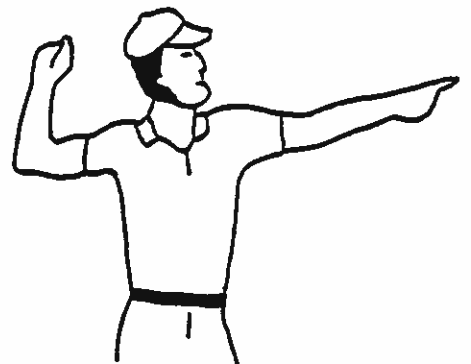
11. **Interference**

Interference is to be called immediately when it occurs.

"TIME" is signalled and called and the umpire will then point to the player that is to be called out on the interference and "signal and call out".



"TIME"



Point and "OUT"

UMPIRE HAND SIGNALS

(Cont'd)

12. Infield Fly Rule

The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder, who stations himself in the infield, shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

This rule eliminates the intentional dropping of the ball for a double play.

The proper call for this rule is: Infield fly batter is out if fair.

"Infield Fly Situation"

The signal is given by the umpire bringing the palm of his right hand up to the left chest area and placing the hand on the chest.



"Infield Fly-Out"

The plate umpire shall raise his right arm straight up with his fist clenched and call "IN-FIELD FLY," batter out if fair.

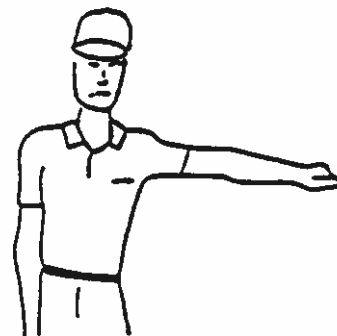


13. Obstruction

A delayed dead ball call is signalled immediately when obstruction occurs, when an illegal pitch is delivered and in other situations. But the majority of the time it is used in obstruction situations.

The delayed dead ball signal is given as soon as the obstruction or catchers interference occurs and a verbal statement will be made, as appropriate. Obstruction is indicated by the umpire extending the left arm horizontally to shoulder level and to the side.

Delayed Dead Ball

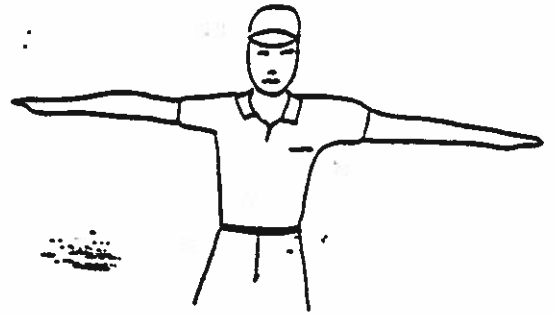


UMPIRE HAND SIGNALS

(Cont'd)

14. "Trapped Ball"

A trapped ball shall be indicated by the umpire extending both arms diagonally in front of his body with palms open, and toward the ground. Do not make a verbal call.



SAFE OR TRAPPED BALL

15. Ground Rule Double

Signalled by the umpire raising the arm straight up over the shoulder and indicating with the fingers the number of bases awarded.



2 BASES

Home Run

Signalled by the umpire raising the right arm straight up over the shoulder with a clenched fist and then moving the arm in a counter-clockwise motion several times to indicate a home run.



4 BASES

