



**SOFTBALL
NEW ZEALAND
UMPIRE**

LEVEL TWO WORKBOOK

E hara tāku toa | te toa takitahi, tāku toa, he toa takitini

My strength is not that of one person, but the strength of many

Softball INZ



Contents

- 1 Our Vision
Our Mission
Our Values
- 2 Foreword
- 3 Level Two – Developing Umpire
- 4 Revision Exercise
- 5 WBSC Two Umpire System – Three Basic Principles
- 6 Base Umpire Ready Position
- 7 Base Umpire Set Position
- 8 Infield/Outfield Principle – Buttonhook
- 9 Base Umpire Rotations
- 14 Umpire Crew Signals
- 16 Base Awards
- 18 Plate Umpire Position – The Slot
- 20 Third Strike Rules
- 22 Infield Fly
- 25 Interference
- 32 Level Two Regional Evaluation Form
- 34 Workbook Exercise Checklist
- 35 Umpire Game Record



Our Vision

The softball community experiences quality umpiring and the enjoyment it creates.

Our Mission

To lead and deliver quality and professional umpiring providing enjoyment and support to all those involved.

Our Values

Passion – encompassing excellence, enthusiasm, persistence and dedication.

Honesty – implicit to gain trust and portray fairness.

Courage – having presence, calmness in how we behave and leadership in game management.

Quality – achieved through consistency, teamwork and continuous improvement.

Enjoyment – for the umpires, players, team management and spectators.

Respect – for each other, players and the rules.

Foreword

Congratulations on achieving Level One and thank you for giving back to the Softball community by choosing to continue umpiring and increase your knowledge and skills by completing this workbook.

Whether you umpire locally or at an international level you are an important part of the game. The best view of the game is from where we stand and trust me the view is outstanding!

Umpiring plays an important role in supporting our elite athletes to excel on the world stage and encouraging our local communities to participate, compete and enjoy Softball.

The Softball New Zealand Umpire Pathways Framework was developed in 2017 to align with the Softball New Zealand Umpires Strategic Plan 2016-2021. The Framework puts in place systems to deliver more, better supported umpires and provide a clear direction and focus for our efforts to achieve a transparent, consistent and effective umpiring grading system throughout the country.

This Level Two Workbook is a part of that grading system and should take around two to three hours to complete. It is not intended to replace the Softball New Zealand (SNZ) official rulebook or World Baseball Softball Congress (WBSC) mechanics manuals but to complement those, introduce and reinforce the minimum level of skills a SNZ Level Two umpire should demonstrate. The workbook will help encourage Level One umpires to build on and develop their skills and to achieve Level Two accreditation.

Becoming a SNZ accredited umpire recognises a level of competence and effort enabling you to wear the SNZ logo with pride, knowing you have earned it.

We are all students of the game and as you progress through the SNZ umpire pathway your learning will be built upon with the Level Three workbook, practical training and mentoring by other umpires. It is hoped that you will be inspired to continue to improve your umpiring and progress through the Pathways Framework. Provided that you umpire both plates and bases for a season, be assessed on four of those games, do a basic umpire theory exam and complete this workbook you will achieve your Level Two accreditation.

The Pathways Framework and Strategic Plan can be viewed on the Softball New Zealand website: <http://www.softball.org.nz/GET+INVOLVED/SNZ+Umpires/Resources.html>

Softball New Zealand would like to acknowledge Softball Australia Limited, Softball Canada and WBSC for some of the content in this manual.

Wiremu Tamaki

***Softball New Zealand (SNZ) Umpire-in-Chief
Kai-Whakawaa Matua - Poiuka Aotearoa***



Level Two – Developing Umpire

Progression to Level Two	
Workbook	Level Two exercises completed
Annual Rules Test Entry Level	60% minimum, resit available via WBSC
Regional Evaluation	Local UIC or their delegate Minimum of four games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two plate • Two base
Level Two Maintenance	
Season Games	10 minimum
Skills Demonstrated General Form Only	In addition to Level One skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plate positioning – the slot • Strike zone consistency • Base positioning for play • Crew signals • Infield fly and interference • Two umpire system mechanics Please refer to Framework for a full list of criteria
Other	Regional seminar – Attendance recommended Rules test – Recommended to sit each season
Opportunities	Regional age grade and school tournaments SNZ Secondary School – Junior, Division Two SNZ Under 15



Workbook Information

This workbook will take around two to three hours to read and complete the five exercises contained in it. You do not have to complete the workbook all at once.

Additional time will be needed to review your exercise answers with your local chief umpire.

Revision Exercise

This exercise is designed as a quick refresher of some of the knowledge gained by completing the Level One workbook.

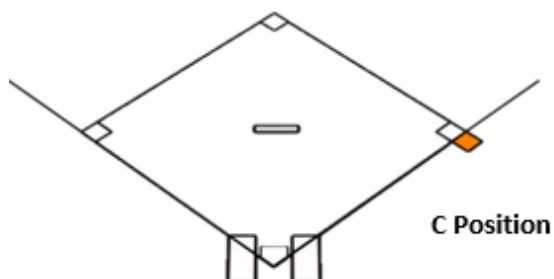
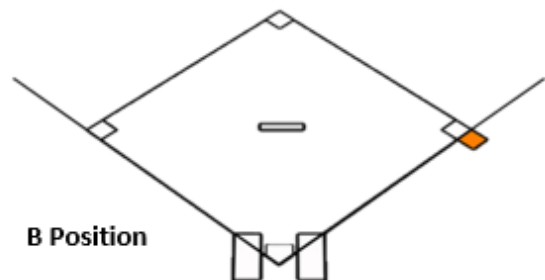
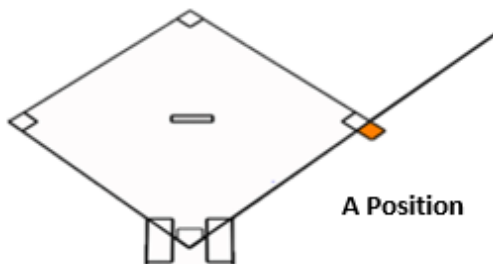
The **four essential elements** in umpiring are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



Four essential element theory is the principal theory used in all WBSA mechanics whether it is a two, three or four umpire system. Umpires use this theory to move to a position (rotation) on a play so they can **see** all four essential elements in **front** of them.

On each of the following diagrams mark an **X** where the **base** umpire should be positioned before the pitch.



Prior to the pitch the umpire should stand relaxed.

You should be focused on the pitch and the batter, be ready and mobile for a possible play.

During a call it is important to **be still** and focused on the play in front of you.

WBSC Two Umpire System – Three Basic Principles

1 The Division Principle

Plate umpire:

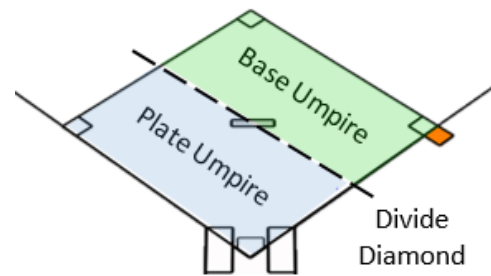
- Takes all calls at home plate and 3rd base
- Takes all catch / no catch calls, infield or outfield
- Makes all fair / foul calls, infield or outfield

Base umpire:

- Takes all calls at 1st base and 2nd base

Exceptions:

- When the batter- runner goes to 3rd base, the **base umpire** follows the batter-runner to 3rd
- On an infield play, the **base umpire** takes the first call on a base, even if it is at 3rd base
- When a runner steals to 3rd base, the **base umpire** takes the call
- If you must deviate, **communicate** your deviation to your partner

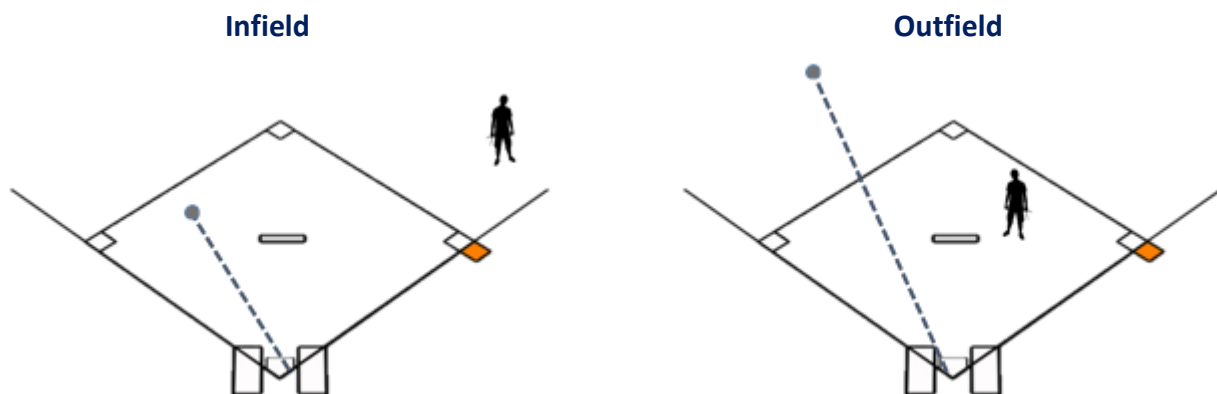


2 The Infield/Outfield Principle

This applies to batted and thrown balls.

When the ball is in the infield, the base umpire moves to, or stays in, the outfield.

When the ball is in the outfield the base umpire moves to a position in the infield.



3 The Leading Runner Principle

The base umpire should start in a position that is up with the lead runner.

The expectation is, on a pick-off* play, the catcher will play the lead runner so the base umpire needs to be in a position to make this call.

***Pick-off play** – A play where the catcher attempts to put out a runner leading off from a base on the pitch.

Note: It is both umpires responsibility to ensure all bases are covered in tag-up situations (retouching the base after a fly ball is **first touched** on a catch).

All umpires must watch for:

- Tags
- Obstruction
- Interference
- Touched bases
- Runners passing each other
- Blocked balls



Base Umpire Ready Position

The ready position is the body position a base umpire takes just before the pitcher brings their hands together for the pause, up until the pitch is released.

The base umpire should assume the ready position by:

1. Facing square to the batter before the pitch, always being able to see **both** the pitcher and the home plate area.
2. As the pitcher takes their pause position (hands together), the umpire should place their feet a comfortable distance apart (at least shoulder width), stay relaxed and still.
3. As the pitcher releases the pitch, slightly bend your knees, rest your weight lightly on the balls of your feet and draw your hands in close to the belt line in front of your body.
Tip: Hold on to your clicker or belt buckle.
4. Remain in this position until the catcher catches the ball or the ball is hit.



Once the ball is hit, or thrown by the catcher, push off from the balls of your feet and move to a position for a potential play.

If the ball is not hit, relax until the start of the next pitch.

Be aware of any play that may require you to move to a position to make a call e.g. pick-off play or pass ball.



Base Umpire Set Position (For Call)

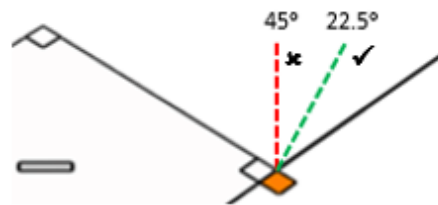
This is the position a base umpire should take, before making a call on a play. This position is very similar to the ready position on the previous page.

On a **force** play, the umpire moves to a proper position to see the play:

- 5-6 metres back
- 90° to the throw

On plays at 1st base:

- Do **not** go beyond 45° to the base
- Take two or three steps into fair territory which will give a 22.5° angle



Once at this position base umpires should go into the set position (same as the ready position), feet apart (normally shoulder width), knees softened and slightly bent with your hands drawn into the body at belt level.

With **runners on** the starting position is closer, around 4 metres behind the base line.

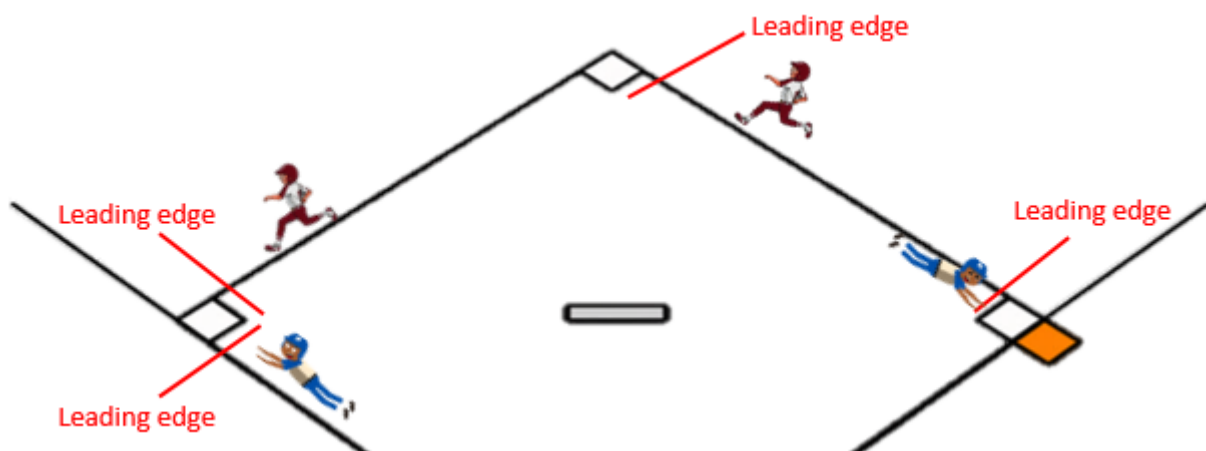
On a **tag** play, the umpire moves to a proper position to see the play:

- 4 metres back and not in line with the throw
- 90° to the runner's base path
- Just short of the **leading edge*** of the base
- Adjust if required to get a better view of the four essential elements



Once at this position the umpire should go into the set position (same as the ready position), feet apart (normally shoulder width), knees softened and slightly bent, with your hands drawn into the body at belt level.

***Leading Edge:** The edge of the base **closest** to the runner. The leading edge can change. If a runner passes a base they return to a different "leading" edge of the base.



Remember: Position yourself so that the ball, base, defensive player (fielder) and the runner (the four essential elements) are **in front of you**.

Infield/Outfield Principle - Revisited

Remember: This applies to batted and thrown balls.


When the ball is in the infield, the base umpire moves to, or stays in, the outfield.

When the ball is in the outfield the base umpire moves to a position in the infield.

The base umpire moves into the infield using a technique called the “buttonhook” which allows you to keep the four essential elements in front of you and see runners touch bases.

Buttonhook

Please ask a senior umpire to demonstrate the “buttonhook” movement.

1. On an **outfield hit**, move from your outfield starting position A, B or C into the infield.
2. Once you are 3-4 metres inside the diamond, plant your **right foot**.
3. Keep your eyes on the runner and they will "make" you rotate **anticlockwise**  (as they round the base) into the direction of the ball. Your **left side** will open up as you pivot on your **right foot**.
4. Adopt the ready/set position (see page 6), watch the runner touch the base, be aware of where the ball is and be ready to move to another position.

Note: If you see a runner miss a base, **do not do, or say, anything**. Missed bases are an **appeal play**. An umpire can only make a missed base call if appealed by a member of the fielding team standing in the **infield**.



Watch the runner touch the base



Revision Exercise – Base Umpire Rotations

Base umpire rotations are important so the umpire can move to the best place to see the play being made, keeping the **four essential elements in front of them**.

Throughout the following exercise we will use terminology that will be in the annual rules test.

For runners R1 is the lead runner, followed by R2 and R3.

For bases 1B = 1st base, 2B = 2nd base, 3B = 3rd base and HP = home plate

Complete the following exercise using the 2020 WBSC **Two** Umpire System Fast Pitch Mechanics. This manual is available via the WBSC website: <https://www.wbsc.org/documents/c/softball-umpire>

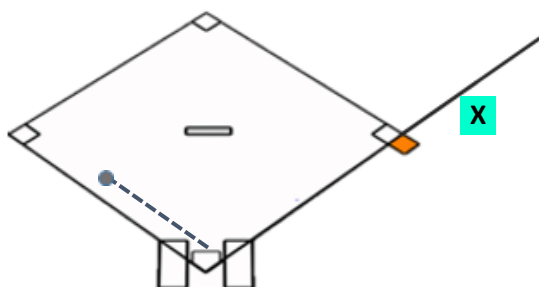
Alternatively you can use the link to WBSC Rules and Mechanics from our SNZ Umpires Resource webpage: <http://www.softball.org.nz/GET+INVOLVED/SNZ+Umpires/Resources.html>

When you are finished this exercise make a time to go through your answers with your local chief umpire. They will explain any questions you don't get right and record (on page 34) that you have completed the exercise for SNZ records. Your mark will not be recorded.

On each of the following diagrams:

From the **X** draw a line to show where the base umpire **moves to on the hit** (to position yourself for the best view of the play).

1.

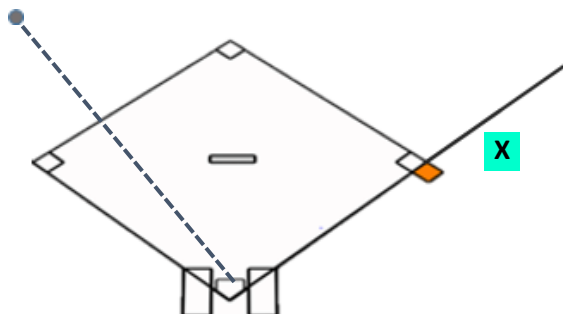


No runners on base

Ball hit to the **infield**

Hint: refer to page 6 of the WBSC Mechanics

2.



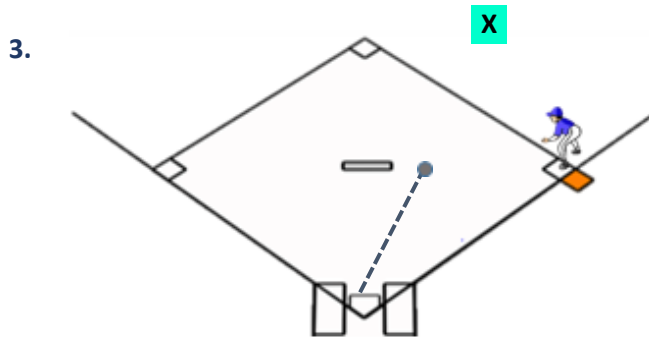
No runners on base

Ball hit to the **outfield**

Hint: refer to page 7 of the WBSC Mechanics

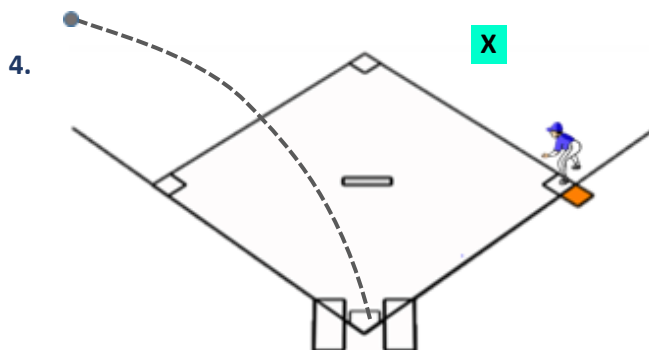
Note: These rotations will put you in the best position to see the four essential elements in **most** plays. Depending on where the fielders are standing or where the ball is hit/thrown you may have to move elsewhere.

On each of the following diagrams – From the **X** draw a line to show where the base umpire moves to on the hit (to position yourself for the best view of the play).



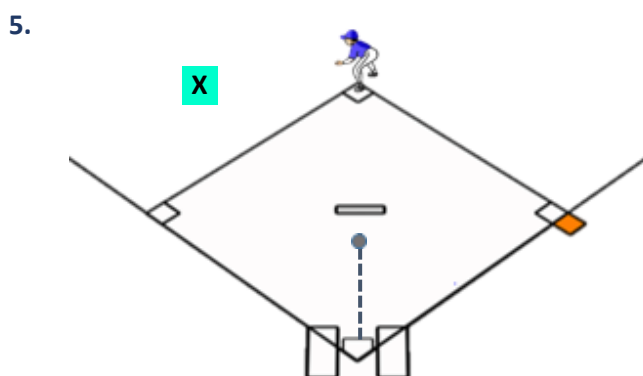
Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **infield**



Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B)

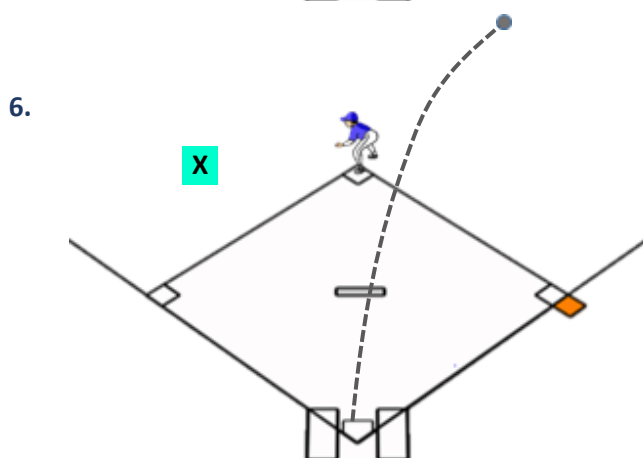
Ball hit to the **outfield**



Runner on 2nd base (R1 on 2B)

Ball hit to the **infield**

From the **X** draw 3 lines to show where you would move to for possible plays at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base



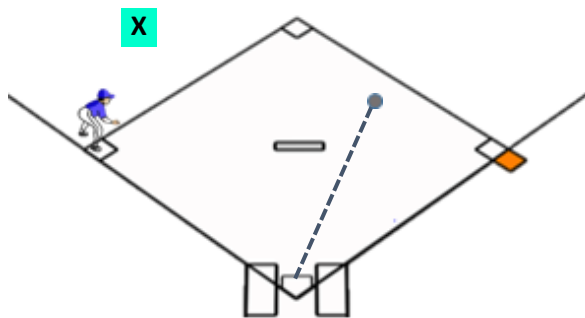
Runner on 2nd base (R1 on 2B)

Ball hit to the **outfield**

Note: These rotations will put you in the best position to see the four essential elements in **most** plays. Depending on where the fielders are standing or where the ball is hit/thrown you may have to move elsewhere.

On each of the following diagrams – From the **X** draw a line to show where the base umpire moves to on the hit (to position yourself for the best view of the play).

7.

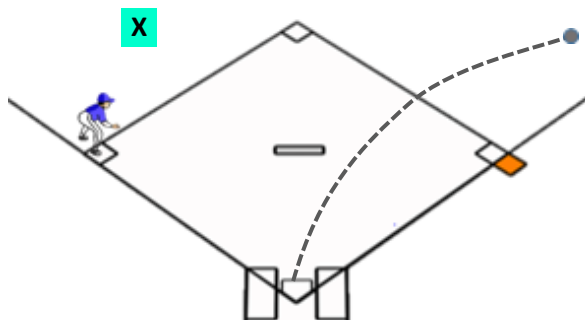


Runner on 3rd base (R1 on 3B)

Ball hit to the **infield**

From the **X** draw 2 lines to show where you would move to for possible plays at 1st or 3rd base

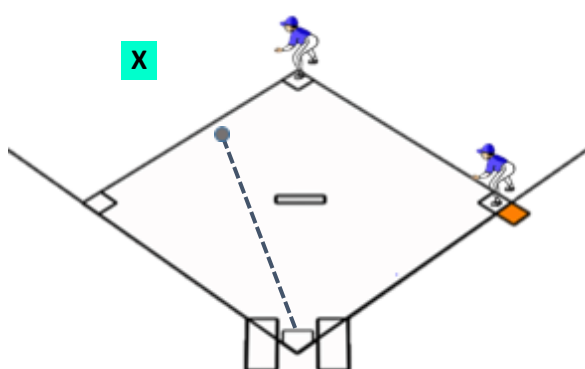
8.



Runner on 3rd base (R1 on 3B)

Ball hit to the **outfield**

9.

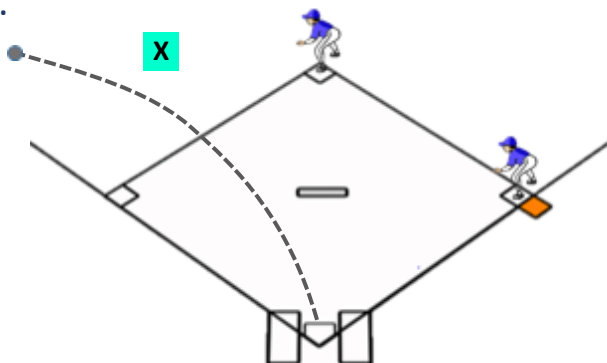


Runners on 1st and 2nd base
(R1 on 2B and R2 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **infield**

From the **X** draw 3 lines to show where you would move to for possible plays at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base

10.



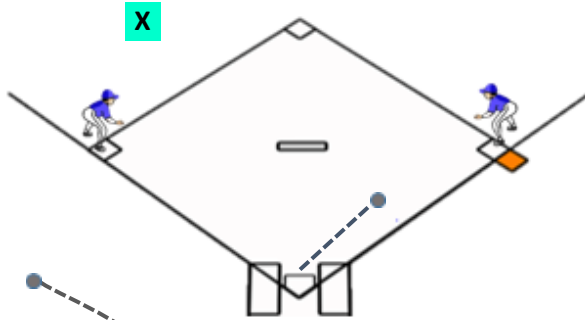
Runners on 1st and 2nd base
(R1 on 2B and R2 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **outfield**

Note: These rotations will put you in the best position to see the four essential elements in **most** plays. Depending on where the fielders are standing or where the ball is hit/thrown, you may have to move elsewhere.

On each of the following diagrams – From the **X** draw a line to show where the base umpire moves to on the hit (to position yourself for the best view of the play).

11.

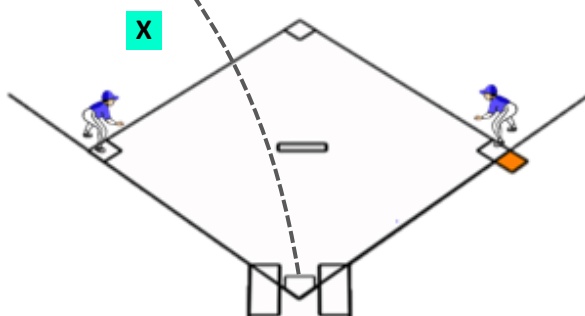


Runners on 1st and 3rd base
(R1 on 3B and R2 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **infield**

From the **X** draw 3 lines to show where you would move to for possible plays at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base

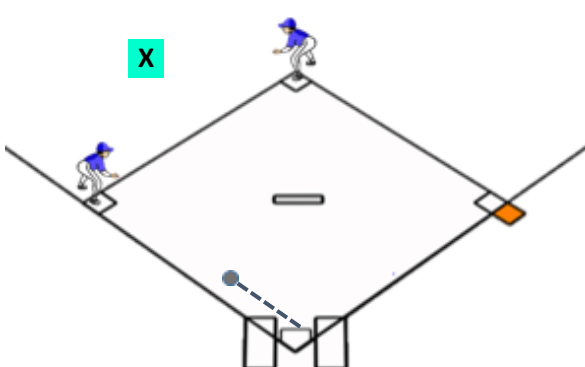
12.



Runners on 1st and 3rd base
(R1 on 3B and R2 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **outfield**

13.

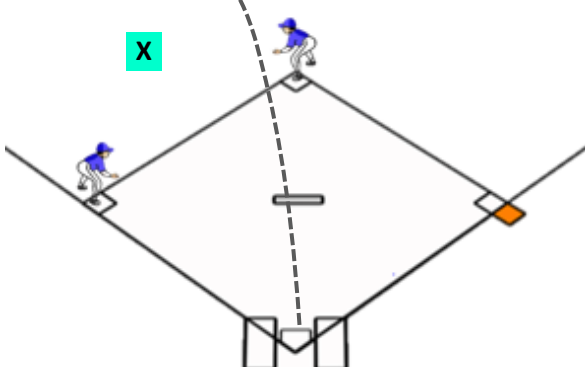


Runners on 2nd and 3rd base
(R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B)

Ball hit to the **infield**

From the **X** draw 3 lines to show where you would move to for possible plays at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base

14.



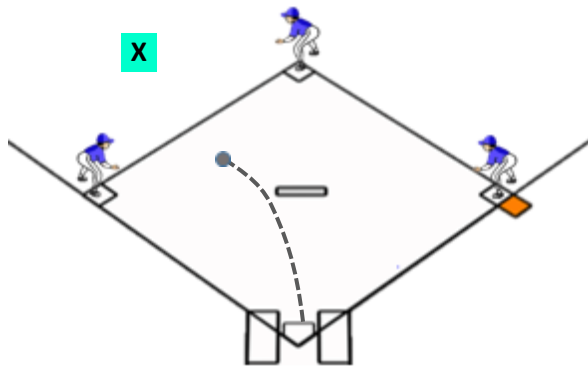
Runners on 2nd and 3rd base
(R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B)

Ball hit to the **outfield**

Note: These rotations will put you in the best position to see the four essential elements in **most** plays. Depending on where the fielders are standing or where the ball is hit/thrown you may have to move elsewhere.

On each of the following diagrams – From the **X** draw a line to show where the base umpire moves to on the hit (to position yourself for the best view of the play).

15.

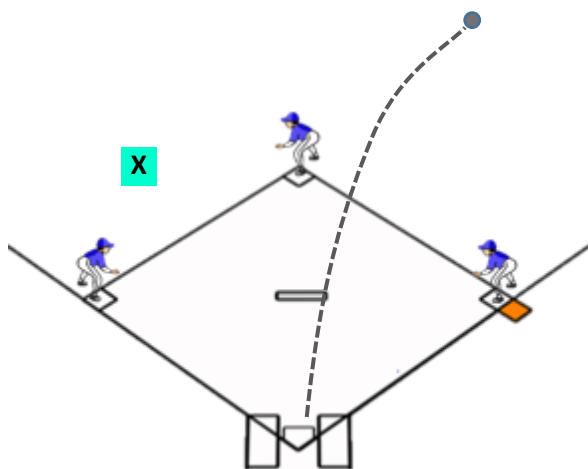


Loaded bases
(R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B and R3 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **infield**

From the **X** draw 3 lines to show where you would move to for possible plays at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base

16.



Loaded bases
(R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B and R3 on 1B)

Ball hit to the **outfield**

Some other things for a base umpire to remember when rotating to a position to get the best view of the **four essential elements**:

- Watch the ball
- Let the ball turn you into the play
- Anticipate a double play
- Be prepared to move to another position for secondary plays
- Watch the runner(s) touch the bases
- Stop, wait, call and signal



Umpire Crew Signals

Umpires need to communicate with each other, this can be done verbally or by using signals. While these signals are only intended for umpires, there is no need to try and hide them or keep them so subtle that umpires will miss them.

Like all signals, these signals are vital to good communication within the crew and keep umpires engaged in the game.

These signals should be precise and used consistently.

To enhance visibility and recognition the signals should always be given against a contrasting background such as the shirt or pant leg.

How Many Outs?

To confirm or check how many outs there are, the umpire looks to a partner and clenches the right fist against the right thigh.

Below picture = 0 out OR how many out?



How Many Outs? – Response

The responding umpire should indicate the number of outs by putting the appropriate number of fingers against the right thigh.

Below picture = 2 out response.



What's The Count?

To request the count from a partner, place both opened hands against your chest.



What's The Count? – Response

The responding umpire should indicate the correct count by the fingers on the chest. Balls on the left hand fingers, strikes on the right.



Home Run*

Fully extend your **right** arm above your head with the index finger pointed skyward and make a circle motion with the hand and arm.



Two Base Award*

Fully extend your right arm above your head with the index and middle finger showing on the hand. Say "Two Bases", do not circle your arm.



*See next page for home run and two base award situations

Infield Fly Situation On – Plate Umpire

Place your **right** hand, palm open, on the left chest to signal the infield fly situation is possible. The infield fly signal should be initiated by the **plate umpire** just before the batter steps in the box.



Infield Fly Situation On – Base Umpire

Each base umpire should acknowledge, to the plate umpire, by returning the same signal. The signal should be given before every batter when an infield fly situation is possible.



See page 23 for the umpire crew signal when an Infield Fly is hit.

Infield Fly Situation Off – Plate Umpire

The **right** hand is used in a wiping motion from the **left** elbow to the **left** wrist to indicate the infield fly situation is no longer in effect.



Infield Fly Situation Off – Base Umpire

Each base umpire should acknowledge, to the plate umpire, by returning the same signal.



Base Awards

Note: For a complete list of base awards please refer to pages 78-81 of the 2018-2021 Official Rules of Softball

Four Base Award – Home Run

A home run is awarded when a fair-batted fly ball:

- Goes over the fence over fair territory
- Goes directly off the fielder's glove or body and over the fence in fair territory
- Makes contact with the top of the fence and goes over the fence in fair territory
- Contacts the foul pole above the fence line
- Is touched by a fielder who is in dead ball territory **and**, in the umpire's judgment, the ball would have gone over the fence in fair territory.

Two Base Award – Ground Rule Double

Two bases are awarded when a **fair-batted** ball:

- Bounces over, rolls under or through a fence
- Passes the dead ball line of the playing field
- Hits a fielder's glove or body and lands over the fence in foul territory
- Touches the fence, deflects off a fielder and lands over a fence
- Is touched by a fielder in dead ball territory **and**, in the umpire's judgment, the ball would **not** have gone over the fence in fair territory
- Deflects off a fielder or an umpire and the ball goes out of play in **foul** territory
- Deflects off a runner (after passing a fielder excluding the pitcher) and no other fielder had a chance to make an out, and the ball goes out of play in **foul** territory.

Two Base Award – Overthrow

Overthrow – When a ball is thrown from one fielder to another, and the ball goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field or becomes a blocked* ball.

When the ball is **thrown** and leaves the playing field or is blocked*, the **two base award is from the time the ball left the fielder's hand** (not the time it becomes dead or blocked).

If two runners are between the same two bases, the award is based on the position of the **lead** runner.

If a runner touches the next base and returns to their original base, the original base they left is considered the "last base touched" for the purposes of an overthrow award.

*Blocked Ball

A batted, thrown or pitched ball that:

- Becomes lodged in the fencing or umpire's clothing or equipment
- Is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game e.g. a spectator
- Touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or playing territory e.g. a tree
- Is touched by a fielder who is touching the ground in dead ball territory (the lines are considered part of the playing area).

Note: a thrown ball touching a base coach accidentally (in or out of the coaches box) is **not** a blocked ball and remains in play.

One Base Award – Pitched Ball

Runners are awarded one base when a **pitched** ball:

- Goes over, rolls under or through a fence
- Passes the dead ball line of the playing field
- Becomes lodged in the backstop net
- On an illegal pitch, not hit by the batter

Revision Exercise – Base Awards

Complete the following questions by yourself. When you have finished this exercise, make a time to go through your answers with your local chief umpire. They will explain any you don't get right and record (on page 34) that you have completed the exercise for SNZ records. Your mark will not be recorded.

Circle your answer

1. A batted ball is hit over the outfield fence on the full (in flight).
RULING: Home run. True False
2. A batted ball bounces over the outfield fence.
RULING: Home run. True False
3. A batted ball hits the foul ball pole on the full (in flight) deflects and lands inside the diamond.
RULING: Home run. True False
4. A batted ball hits the foul ball pole on the full (in flight) deflects and lands in foul territory.
RULING: Foul ball. True False
5. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B). A wild pitch goes over the backstop net.
RULING: R1 is awarded 2nd base. True False
6. Runner on 3rd base (R1 on 3B). The catcher doesn't catch a pitch which rolls through a hole in the backstop net.
RULING: R1 is awarded home. True False
7. Runner on 2nd base (R1 on 2B). A pitch deflects off the catcher's glove and rolls over the dead ball line just past the edge of the backstop net.
RULING: R1 is awarded home. True False
8. No runners on. The batter hits to the outfield. The batted ball bounces over the outfield fence **before** they reach 1st base.
RULING: The batter is awarded 2nd base. True False
9. No runners on. The batter hits to the outfield. The batted ball bounces over the outfield fence **after** they reach 1st base.
RULING: The batter is awarded 3rd base. True False
10. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B). The batter hits to the outfield and the ball bounces over the outfield fence. R1 touched 2nd base **before** the ball bounced over the outfield fence.
RULING 1: R1 is awarded home True False
RULING 2: The batter is safe on 2nd base. True False

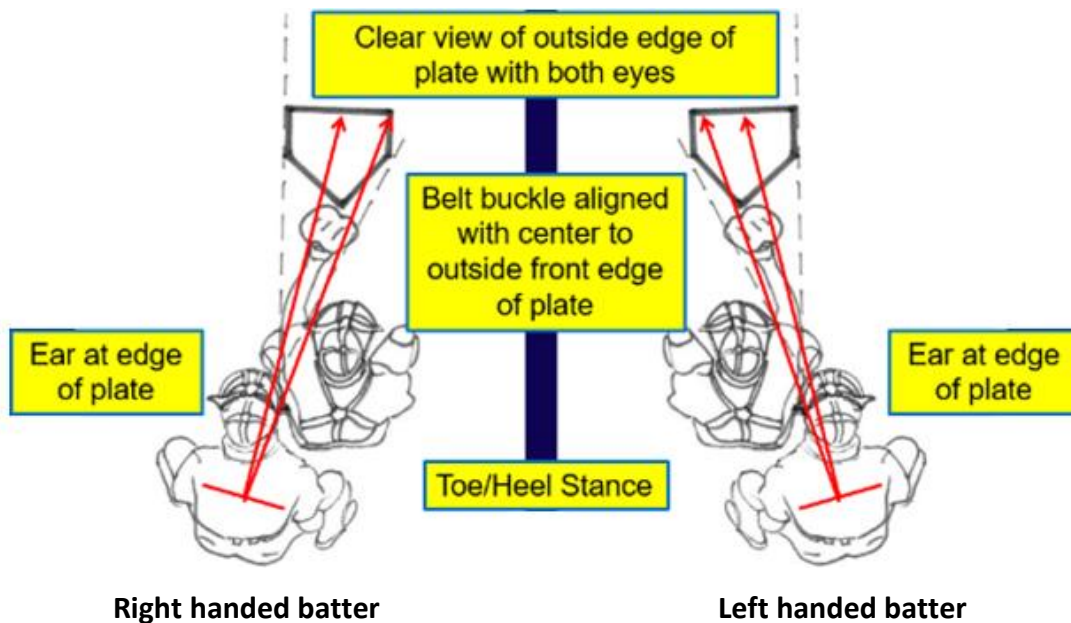
Plate Umpire Position – The Slot

The plate umpire should line up with:

- Eyes just above the **top of the zone**
- Ear on the **inside edge of the plate**
- Positioned **between** home plate and the batter i.e. **“the slot”**

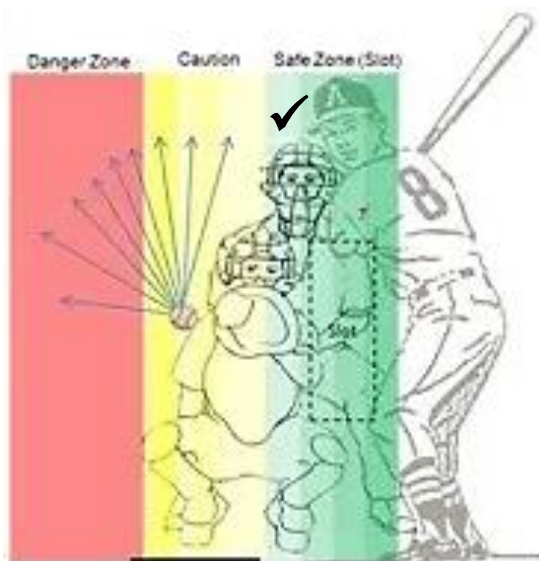


Plate umpires should judge balls and strikes over the catcher’s shoulder nearest to the batter.

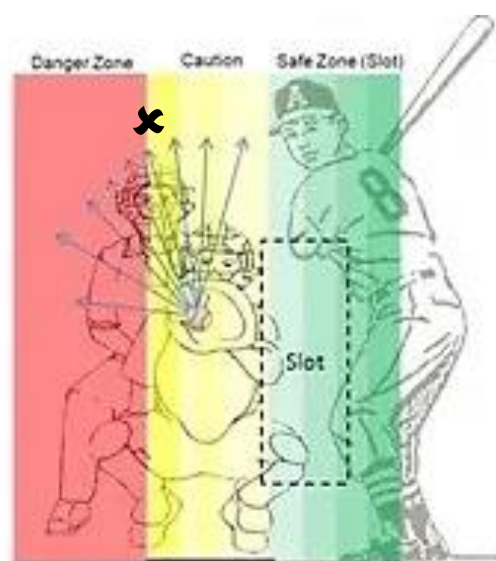


Why Do We Stand In The Slot?

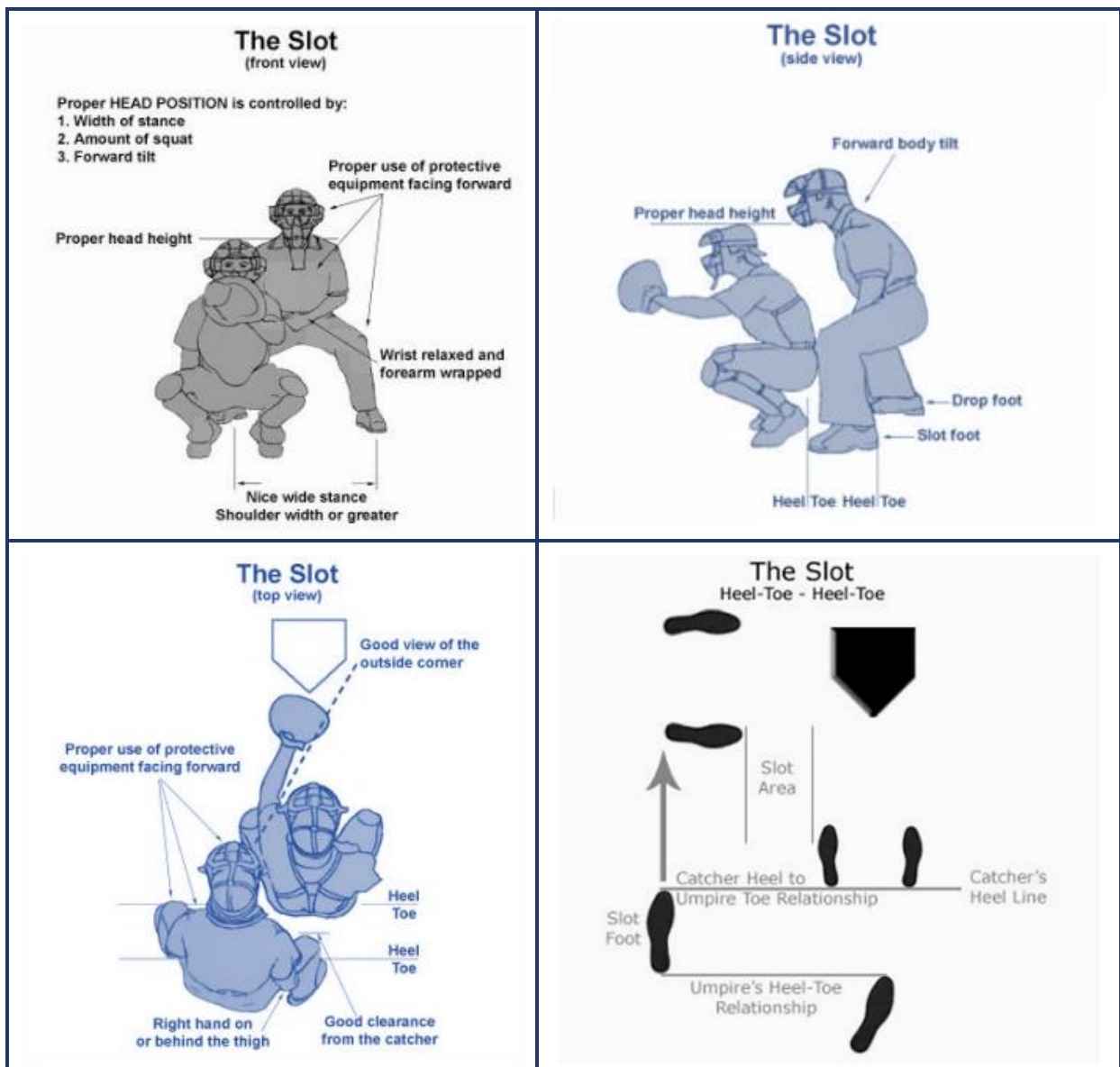
1. It is the best position to see all of the **plate**, have a clear view of the **pitch** and the **batter**.
2. It is the safest position to stand i.e. you get hit less! It has been proven, over time, that whilst there is no perfect position for a plate umpire to stand, working the slot is considered the safest.



Work the slot in the safe **Green Zone**



NEVER move to the opposite side of the catcher



Things To Remember

- When calling a **Strike**:
 - Stay down in the squatted position
Wait until the ball hits the catcher's glove...
 Then call "STRIKE"
 - Stand and bring left arm across the body
 - Raise right arm above the body
 Elbow at shoulder height
 Clenched fist
- When calling a **Ball**:
 - Stay down in the squatted position, **wait** until the ball hits the catcher's glove, then call "BALL"
 - Stand (no signal)
- After each pitch, step back and relax



Third Strike Rules

5.4.4a) i – The batter is out when the catcher **catches** a third strike that is:

- Called
- Swung at
- A foul tip



5.1.44 – Any number of outs (0, 1 or 2), if the third strike is dropped, and **1st base is empty** (unoccupied), the batter-runner is **safe if**:

- They can **beat** the throw to 1st base OR
- They **do not get tagged** before reaching 1st base

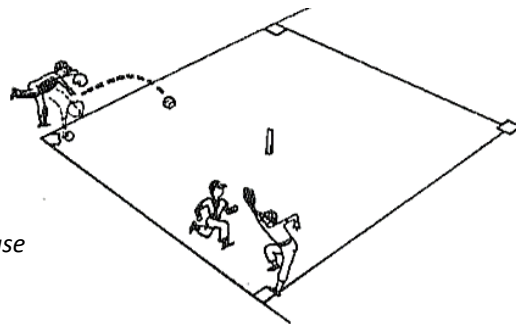
Note: Local association rules for some junior age grades may be different e.g. Tee-ball and under 11.

*Base 1 **empty** (unoccupied)*

Any number of outs (0, 1 or 2)

Third strike dropped =

*Batter-runner **must be tagged** before reaching 1st base
OR thrown out at 1st base.*



5.4.4a) ii – Commonly known as the “Dropped Third Strike” rule.

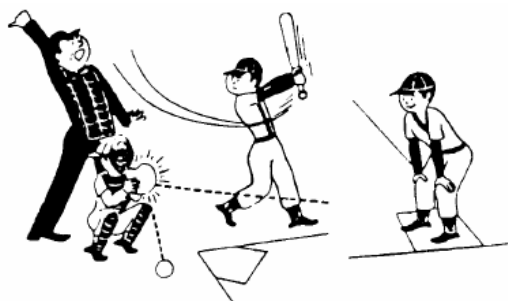
The batter is out when a third strike is called (even if the catcher **doesn’t catch** it) and:

- 1st base is **occupied** (with or without other runners on base) AND
- Less than two out (0 or 1 out)

E.g: When a third strike is called by the umpire and the ball is dropped **OR** goes past the catcher with a **runner on 1st base** and **less than two out**, the batter is automatically out.

The purpose of this rule is to stop the catcher dropping the ball deliberately to try for a double play.

Note: There is no umpire crew signal for this situation, umpires must be aware of the situation.



*Base 1 **Occupied***

0 out OR 1 out

Third strike dropped =

*Batter is automatically **out**.*

5.4.4b) i – The ball is **dead** and the batter is **out** when they:

- Swing for a third strike, miss and the ball touches **any part** of the batter’s person (body or clothing) in, or out, of the batter’s box.
- A pitched ball, not swung at, hits the batter while the pitch is in the strike zone.

Revision Exercise – Third Strike Rules

Complete the following questions by yourself. When you have finished this exercise, make a time to go through your answers with your local chief umpire. They will explain any you don't get right and record (on page 34) that you have completed the exercise for SNZ records. Your mark will not be recorded.

Circle your answer

1. No outs. No runners on base. The batter **foul tips** the third strike straight into the catcher's glove.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
2. One out. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B). The batter hits the third strike **foul** into the backstop net.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
3. No outs. No runners on base. The batter swings and misses the third strike. The pitch hits the ground and bounces into the catcher's glove.
RULING: The batter must be tagged or thrown out at 1st base to be out. True False
4. No outs. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B).
Is this a possible "dropped third strike" situation? Yes No
5. Two out. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B).
Is this a possible "dropped third strike" situation? Yes No
6. No outs. Runners on 1st and 3rd base (R1 on 3B, R2 on 1B).
Is this a possible "dropped third strike" situation? Yes No
7. One out. Loaded bases (R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B, R3 on 1B).
Is this a possible "dropped third strike" situation? Yes No
8. Two out. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B).
Is this a possible "dropped third strike" situation? Yes No
9. Can runners steal a base when a third strike is caught by the catcher? Yes No
10. One out. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B).
The batter swings and misses the third strike which the catcher drops.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
11. Two out. Runner on 1st base (R1 on 1B).
The batter swings and misses the third strike which the catcher drops.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
12. No outs. Runners on 1st and 3rd base (R1 on 3B, R2 on 1B).
The batter swings and misses the third strike which goes past the catcher.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
13. One out. Runner on 3rd base (R1 on 3B).
The batter swings and misses the third strike which hits their arm.
RULING: The batter is out. True False

Infield Fly

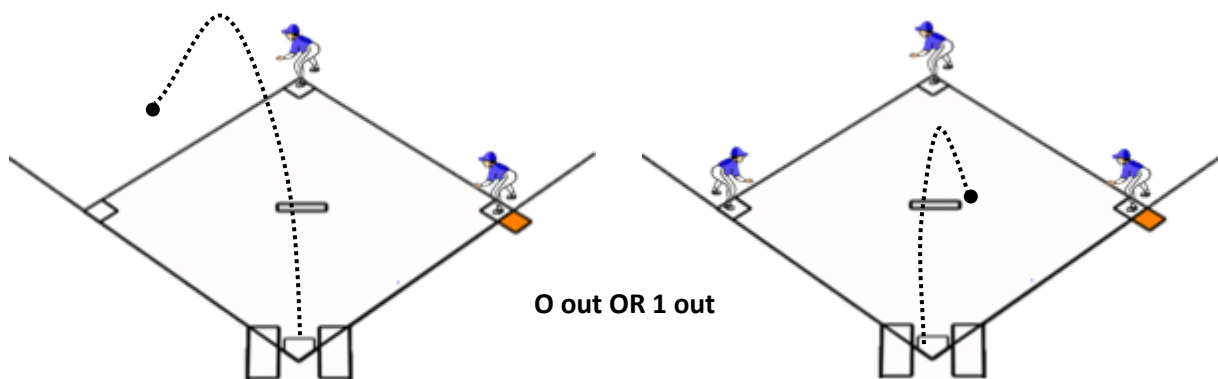
An infield fly is a **fair fly*** batted ball (not a line drive or attempted bunt) that can be caught by an **infielder** with **ordinary effort**, when:

- 1st and 2nd bases are occupied OR
- 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are occupied AND
- There are **less than two out** (0 or 1 out).

***Fly ball** – Any ball batted into the air that rises, reaches a peak then falls back towards the ground.

When **all** of the above conditions are met, **the batter is out**, whether or **not** a catch is made.

The purpose of this rule is to stop an infielder dropping the ball deliberately to get a double out.



The plate (or base) umpire should call “infield fly” for the runners benefit.

The “infield fly” call should be made when an umpire is certain that it will be an infield fly. **Just after** the ball has reached its peak and has started falling back towards the ground. This gives the umpire/s time to judge whether the batted ball could be caught with ordinary effort by an infielder.

Once “infield fly” has been ruled the batter is out **whether or not** a catch is made.

Once the out is called and the ball is caught (or dropped), base runners may advance **at their own risk**.

If an infield fly is **caught**, runners **must retouch** their base before advancing at their own risk.

If an infield fly is **not caught**, runners do not have to retouch their base before advancing.

Note: If you see a runner leave their base before an infield fly is caught, **do not do, or say, anything**. Not retouching a base after a ball is caught (or first touched) is an **appeal play**. An umpire can only make a decision **if appealed** by a fielding team member standing in the infield.

An infield fly that is **not** caught and goes foul (before passing 1st or 3rd base) is a **foul ball**.

What is Ordinary Effort?

Ordinary effort is a **judgement** call that can depend on the skill level of players or even the weather conditions. In a junior game (T-ball, U11, U13) sometimes just catching a ball is extraordinary.

A fielder having to take a few steps to the side, backwards or forwards, is ordinary effort.

If, in your judgement, a player would have to dive, or turn, to make a catch, this is probably **not** ordinary effort.

“**Rule of thumb**” to determine if a batted ball is an infield fly:

Is, or could, the fielder be **facing the batter** when making the catch?
If no, then it is **not** ordinary effort.



This is **NOT** an infield fly.

Infield Fly – Umpire Crew Signal

Either the plate or any base umpire may make an infield fly call.

Fully extend your right arm above your head with your hand in a clenched fist.

Say: “Infield fly – batter is out”.

If the ball is close to the 1st or 3rd base line, the plate umpire should say:
“Infield fly – batter is out, **if fair**”.

Once the plate umpire makes the call, it should be echoed by the base umpire/s using the same signal but only calling “infield fly”.

If the plate umpire does not make an infield fly call (forgets or is not sure) and a base umpire is certain the ball is an infield fly, the base umpire may make the call.



Revision Exercise – Infield Fly

Complete the following questions by yourself. When you have finished this exercise, make a time to go through your answers with your local chief umpire. They will explain any you don’t get right and record (on page 34) that you have completed the exercise for SNZ records. Your mark will not be recorded.

Circle your answer

1. One out. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B). Is this an infield fly situation?
Yes No
2. No outs. Runners on 1st and 3rd base (R1 on 3B, R2 on 1B). Is this an infield fly situation?
Yes No
3. One out. Loaded bases (R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B, R3 on 1B). Is this an infield fly situation?
Yes No
4. Two out. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B). Is this an infield fly situation?
Yes No
5. Which arm do you use to signal a batted ball is an infield fly?
Left Right
6. Runners may advance at their own risk when an infield fly is declared.
True False
7. Only the plate umpire can declare an infield fly.
True False

8. No outs. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball towards the pitcher (F1). The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
F1 catches the ball.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
9. No outs. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball towards 2nd base (F4). The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
F4 loses the ball in the sun and does **not** catch the ball.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
10. One out. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball between shortstop (F6) and 3rd base (F5). The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
Both F5 and F6 call for the ball. Hearing each other's call, they stop and the ball falls to the ground.
R1 runs to 3rd base.
RULING 1: The batter is out True False
RULING 2: R1 is safe on 3B. True False
11. No outs. Loaded bases (R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B, R3 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball towards 1st base (F3). The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
F3 loses the ball in the sun and does **not** catch or touch the ball.
The ball lands in the infield and rolls untouched into foul territory and stops.
RULING: Foul ball. True False
12. One out. Loaded bases (R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B, R3 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball towards 3rd base (F5). The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
F5 fumbles the infield catch and drops the ball. The ball rolls into foul territory and stops.
RULING: The batter is out. True False
13. One out. Loaded bases (R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B, R3 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball towards shortstop (F6). The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
R1 starts running home on the hit.
F6 catches the batted ball and throws to 3rd base (F5) before R1 can return.
F5 touches their base and appeals for R1 not "tagging up" on the catch.
RULING 1: The batter is out. True False
RULING 2: R1 is out. True False
14. One out. Runners on 1st and 2nd base (R1 on 2B, R2 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball to 2nd base (F4). The umpire/s call "Infield Fly".
F4 misses the catch, picks the ball up from the ground and tags R2 advancing from 1st base.
RULING 1: The batter is out. True False
RULING 2: R2 is out. True False
15. One out. Loaded bases (R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B, R3 on 1B).
The batter hits a fly ball towards 2nd base (F4).
R1 starts running home on the hit. The umpire/s call "Infield fly".
F4 trips over and misses the catch, then picks up the ball and throws to the catcher (F2).
F2 touches home plate and throws the ball back to the pitcher (F1).
R1 continues running and touches home plate.
RULING 1: The batter is out. True False
RULING 2: R1 is out on the force play at home. True False

Interference

Interference is probably the most difficult call an umpire can make in a game of softball because someone will be called out. Many people get interference confused with obstruction and you may want to review the obstruction section of your Level One workbook after completing this section.

What is interference? Interference is a **judgement call** and is the act of:

- An offensive player or team member who impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player (fielder) attempting to execute a play. An offensive player or team member includes:
 - Batter
 - On-deck batter
 - Batter-runner
 - Coach
 - Runner
- A runner (or umpire) being hit with a fair batted ball outside of the batter's box **before it is touched by a fielder** (including the pitcher).
- A runner (or umpire) being hit with a fair batted ball **before passing an infielder** (except the pitcher) without being touched.
- A runner (or umpire) being hit with a fair batted ball after passing an infielder (except the pitcher) that impedes **another fielder making a play** (if in the umpires judgement the other fielder had a chance to get an out).
- An umpire who impedes a catcher's attempt to throw out a runner who is off their base (steal or pick-off attempt).
- A spectator who enters or reaches into the playing field and impedes a fielder OR makes contact with the ball a fielder is attempting to make a play on.

Note: Any umpire can call interference. If you see a batting team member commit an act of interference call "Dead Ball" straight away.

Best practice: If the Plate Umpire calls "Dead Ball" then Base Umpires should mirror the call and signal.







Most times interference is accidental, however intent does not matter - we have an out.

	Interference – By the Batting Team	Obstruction – By the Fielding Team
Umpire Signal	Dead Ball signal and verbal call	Delayed dead ball signal
Penalty	Someone from the batting team is out! Possible exceptions: Umpire interference	Runner is "protected" between the two bases where the obstruction occurred. They may be returned to a base OR advanced to the next.

There are many forms of interference, we will discuss **some**, on the next few pages.






Batter Interference – Hit With Batted Ball

Situation	Interference?	Umpire Action PU = Plate Umpire BU = Base Umpire
<p>1. Batter hit with batted ball: Both feet inside the batter's box</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>PU: Call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>PU Hint: After your "Dead Ball" call and signal say "Inside" and point to the batter's box. This stops most coaches calling time to ask "out of the box Blue?"</p> <p>BU: Mirror PU call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>PU: This is a Strike, when pitcher has the ball again give the count</p> <p>Base runners return to last base touched</p>
<p>2. Batter hit with batted ball in FAIR territory: One foot completely outside the batter's box in the air</p> 	<p>No</p> <p>Foot must be completely outside the batter's box AND on the ground</p>	<p>PU: Call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>PU Hint: After your "Dead Ball" call and signal say "Inside" and point to the batter's box. This stops most coaches calling time to ask "out of the box Blue?"</p> <p>BU: Mirror PU call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>PU: This is a strike, when pitcher has the ball again give the count</p> <p>Base runners return to last base touched</p>
<p>3. Ball hits bat a second time: Both feet inside the batter's box OR one foot outside box in the air</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>This is a foul ball, rule 5.1.20e</p> <p>PU: Call and signal "Foul ball"</p>
<p>4. Batter hit with batted ball in FAIR territory: One foot completely outside the batter's box AND on the ground</p> 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Be loud with your "Dead Ball" call people need to hear it!</p>	<p>PU: Call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>PU: Call and signal "Out"</p> <p>BU: Mirror PU call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>Base runners return to last base touched at time of interference</p> 

Batter-Runner Interference – Hit With Batted Ball




Situation	Interference?	Umpire Action PU = Plate Umpire BU = Base Umpire
<p>1. Batter-runner hit with batted ball in FOUL territory: Ball is on or close to the ground</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>This is a foul ball, rule 5.1.20d PU: Call and signal “Foul ball”</p>
<p>2. Batter-runner hit with batted ball in FAIR territory:</p> 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Be loud with your “Dead Ball” call people need to hear it!</p>	<p>PU: Call and signal “Dead Ball” PU: Call and signal “Out” BU: Mirror PU call and signal “Dead Ball” Base runners return to last base touched at time of interference</p> 
<p>3. Batter-runner hit with batted fly ball in the air FOUL territory:</p> 	<p>It Depends!</p> <p>Did any fielder have a chance to catch the ball?</p> <p>← No Yes →</p>	
<p>Did any fielder have a chance to catch the ball? PU judgement = NO PU: Call and signal “Foul ball”</p>		<p>Did any fielder have a chance to catch the ball? PU judgement = YES PU: Call and signal “Dead Ball” Call “Interference, Out” and signal out BU: Mirror PU call and signal “Dead Ball” Base runners return to last base touched at time of interference</p>

Base Runner Interference – Batted Ball or Thrown Ball

Situation	Interference?	Umpire Action PU = Plate Umpire BU = Base Umpire
<p>1. Base runner hit with batted ball before passing a fielder (other than the pitcher)</p> 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Be loud with your "Dead Ball" call people need to hear it!</p>	<p>BU or PU: Call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>BU or PU: Call and signal "Out"</p> <p>Other umpire: Mirror call and signal "Dead Ball"</p> <p>Base runners return to last base touched at time of interference</p> 
<p>2. Base runner hit with batted ball after passing a fielder (other than the pitcher)</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>Play on</p>
<p>3. Base runner leading off from 3rd base in FOUL territory hit with batted ball:</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>This is a foul ball, rule 5.1.20d</p> <p>PU: Call and signal "Foul ball"</p>
<p>4. Base runner jumps over the ball</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>Play on</p>
<p>5. Base runner hit with a thrown ball</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Play on</p>

Base Runner Interference – Fielder Attempting to Field a Batted Ball

If there is a collision causing interference on the base path, the base umpire should have the **first** opportunity to call the interference, if they don't, then the plate umpire should call it.




All of the below situations = Interference	
	
	
 <p>Ball in fielder's glove</p>	<p>Click on the links below to watch videos of base runner interference (some are baseball videos but softball interference rules would apply).</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ifcNpXjT4I</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ove37_KsbAc</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhT64xkkINy</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <p>Be loud with your "Dead Ball" call, people need to hear it!</p> </div>

Base runners return to **last base touched at time of interference**, unless forced to advance by the batter becoming a batter-runner.

Eg. R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B. R2 interferes with shortstop (F6) fielding batted ball = Dead ball

R2 is out, R1 remains on 3B, batter is awarded 1B.

Umpire Interference – What Happens When We Interfere?

Situation	Interference?	Umpire Action	PU = Plate Umpire BU = Base Umpire
<p>1. Plate umpire hit by a pitch</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>Play on</p>	
<p>2. Plate umpire hit by a foul batted ball</p> 	<p>No</p>	<p>This is a foul ball, rule 5.1.20d PU: Call and signal “Foul ball”</p>	
<p>On foul fly balls, try not to watch and/or follow the ball. If you watch or follow the ball, you could interfere with the catcher trying to catch the foul ball. Instead watch the catcher’s shoulders, not the ball. Step back and away with your foot on the same side the catcher is turning to and pivot off the opposite foot, i.e. “clear the catcher”. When the catcher finds the ball, let them take you towards the ball. Follow the catcher from a distance of about 3 metres so you don’t get in their way (interfere).</p>			
<p>3. Plate umpire hit with a thrown ball</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Play on</p>	
<p>On a passed ball or wild pitch, a runner on 3rd base may try to score by stealing home. The catcher will be chasing the ball, the pitcher running in to cover the plate, and the runner moving. Plate umpires need to get out of the way! Move to a position around 3 metres from home plate, in foul territory, keeping the four essential elements in front of you and watch the play develop.</p>			
<p>4. Plate umpire interferes with catcher’s throw to a base a runner is stealing.</p> 	<p>Yes</p> <p>But... No one is out!</p>	<p>PU: Signal a “Delayed Dead Ball” and Wait until the conclusion of the play!</p> <p>If the runner is caught stealing and called “Out” no further action is required</p> <p>If the runner is called “Safe” then:</p> <p>PU: Call and signal “Dead Ball” then say “Umpire Interference”</p> <p>Runner goes back to original base held</p> <p>PU: Give the count</p>	



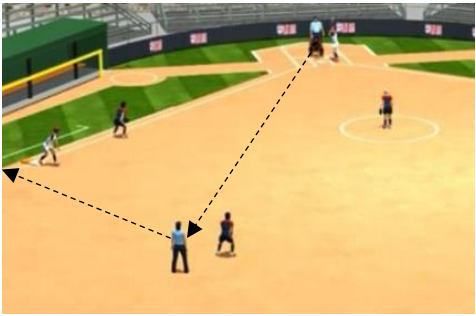
Situation	Interference?	Umpire Action PU = Plate Umpire BU = Base Umpire
5. Base umpire hit with a thrown ball	No	Play on
6. Base umpire hit with a thrown ball, which deflects into foul territory	No	Play on
7. Base umpire in “A” position hit by a foul batted ball	No	This is a foul ball, rule 5.1.20d PU: Call and signal “Foul ball”
<p>8. Base umpire hit by a fair batted ball after passing a fielder (other than the pitcher)</p> 	No	Play on
<p>9. Base umpire hit by a fair batted ball before passing a fielder (other than the pitcher)</p> 	Yes But... No one is out!	PU: Call and signal “Dead ball” PU: Award the batter-runner 1 st base and any other runners the base they would have made, in your judgement, had the interference not happened.
<p>10. Base umpire hit by a fair batted ball after passing a fielder (other than the pitcher) ball deflects into foul territory</p> 	No	Fair ball, play on
11. Runner collides with, or contacts, any umpire	No	Play on

	Plate: Game One	Plate: Game Two	Base: Game One	Base: Game Two
Evaluator Initials				
Evaluator Feedback Received: Umpire To Initial Each Game				
<i>If total "Yes" is less than 60, provide umpire with feedback (things to work on). Evaluate another game at a later date (plate and/or base). Replace lowest game total "Yes" with new game total "Yes" and re-total.</i>			Total Yes	
			60 or more "Yes" = Level Two	

Feedback – What Was Done Well and Things to Work On:

Game One

Game Two

Game Three

Game Four

Evaluator One Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Evaluator Two Name or N/A: _____ **Signature:** _____

Four Game Evaluation Copy Received: _____ **Umpire Signature:** _____

Level Two Workbook Exercise Checklist

Exercise	Completed Umpire Initial	Reviewed with UIC	
		UIC Initial	Date
Revision Exercise Page 4			
Base Umpire Rotations Pages 9-13			
Base Awards Page 17			
Third Strike Rules Page 21			
Infield Fly Pages 23-24			



Version History

Version	Date	Resources
1.0 JF	April 2020	For use with: 2020 WBSC Two Umpire System Fast Pitch Mechanics Softball New Zealand Official Rules of Softball 2018-2021

Umpire Game Record

Use this page to record games you umpire during the season. At the end of the season, give your game numbers to your local chief umpire.

No:	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Grade	Plate Umpire	Base Umpire(s)
E.g.	10/10/20XX	Saints	Te Aroha	U15	Ima Umpire	Level Tubi
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
Level Two Requirement Achieved – Ka Pai						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
15 Games – Tino Pai						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						