

2-Umpire Responsibilities & Field Positioning

Introduction

This is a summary overview of 2-umpire mechanics for 60' (majors and minors) baseball. Home plate umpire calls balls/strikes from behind the plate and the field umpire is responsible for base runners using the A, B, C, field positioning.

Descriptions and video tutorials are below.

Umpire Positions & Responsibilities (2-umpire mechanics)

- 1) **Plate Umpire** (for your safety, you MUST wear a cup, umpire mask, throat guard, chest protector and chin pads)
 - a. Responsibilities:
 - i. Call balls/strikes on pitches to the batter.
 - ii. All Fair/Foul calls.
 - iii. All line drive and fly ball calls to both the infield and outfield.
 - iv. All plays at the plate.
 - v. Make calls at 3rd base if field umpire is out of position.
 - vi. Responsible for putting the ball back in play.
 - b. Positioning:
 - i. Stand about 2-3 feet behind the catcher. If the batter is batting righty, position yourself a few steps offset to the left of the catcher into the "slot" for the best view of the pitch. If the batter is batting lefty, position yourself a few steps offset to the right of the catcher for the best view of the pitch.
 - ii. Be careful not to impede actions of the catcher, batter, or advancing base runner to home plate.

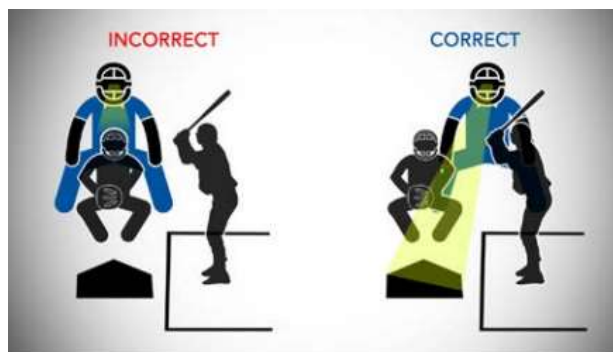


Figure 1. Plate umpire position for right-handed hitter. For left-handed hitter, switch sides.

Tips:

- 1) To signal a pitch that went through the strike zone and wasn't swung at, the umpire will verbally & loudly call out, "strike" while signaling with the right hand. The strike hand signal is typically a closed, fist raised above the right ear. For a swinging strike, provide only the hand signal.
- 2) To signal a pitch is a ball, umpires should say "ball". There is no hand signal given for a ball.

Home Plate Umpire Videos:

- Home plate umpire calling a:
 - o [strike](#)
 - o [ball](#)

2) **Field Umpire:**

a. Responsibilities:

- i. Make calls (out/safe) on runners advancing to a base and running on the base path.
- ii. When in position A (see below) be prepared to determine if a batter's check swing is a strike. ONLY when the home plate umpire requests your judgement.
- iii. All tag plays or force plays at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases (Plate umpire may take calls at 3rd base if field umpire is out of position.)
- iv. All calls on tag-up appeals on a caught fly ball.

b. Positioning:

- i. You'll position yourself (A, B, C, positioning) depending on base runner locations on the bases. Position yourself just about 3 steps into the outfield.
 1. Position A: when nobody is on base. Position yourself 10 – 12 feet behind 1st base in foul territory.
 2. Position B: when a runner is on first base. Position yourself 2 – 3 steps behind and 2 – 3 steps to the left of the 2nd baseman (in normal position).
 3. Position C: when a runner is on second and/or third base. Position yourself 2 – 3 steps behind and 2 – 3 steps to the left of the shortstop (in normal position).

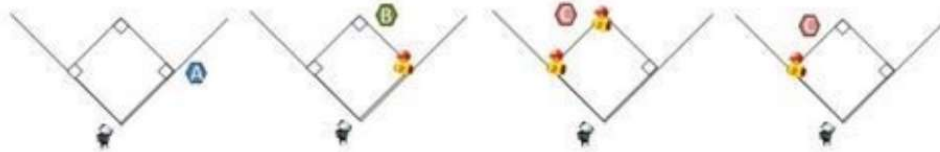


Figure 2. Field Umpire positioning

Tips:

- 3) If you forget where you should stand to start a play, stand in the 'Slot' that is directly in front of the lead runner.
- 4) Making accurate calls starts with getting to the right place at the right time and where you have the best view of the play.
- 5) When the ball is hit, track where it is going. You need to quickly decide where the play is likely going and the throwing lane to make sure you stay out of the way of the ball as you move into position.
- 6) If the ball is hit and fielded in the infield, stay "outside" the base path to make your call.

7) If the ball is hit and fielded in the outfield, run "inside" the base path (into the Working Area) to make your call.

8) Favor angle over distance. As an example, if you're in the C position and the batter-runner hits and runs to first, you'll want to position yourself at the best angle (from a distance) to view any tags on the runner, etc.

9) You want to be firmly set, not moving, when it's time to make your call.

Video tutorials of the A, B, C field umpire positioning:

Position A: <https://www.littleleague.org/university/articles/a-position-no-runners-on/>

Position B: <https://www.littleleague.org/videos/b-position-runner-on-first/>

Position C: <https://www.littleleague.org/university/articles/c-position-runner-on-second-third-or-bases-full/>