

UMPIRE ETHICS AND BASEBALL

1. PREREQUISITES FOR GOOD UMPIRING

A. Decisions must be made positively and promptly

1. Stop to make a decision.
2. Be confident...sell the call.
3. Make calls loudly and clearly.
4. Positive action...accepted judgment.

B. Totally ignore remarks from the crowd:

1. The spectators believe this is their job.
2. You lose respect by reacting to criticism.

C. Efficient umpires do not showboat:

1. Execute the duties without flair.
2. Players lose respect for an actor.

D. Courtesy is a must to players and coaches:

1. A dignified attitude gains respect.
2. We must never argue with players or coaches.

2. CODE OF ETHICS FOR UMPIRES

A. Improve at all times by observing other umpires.

B. Conduct yourself as to not draw attention to yourself, but to the players.

C. Your conduct should be that of good example.

D. Be fair and unbiased regardless of the score.

E. Be firm but not overbearing.

F. Be positive.

G. Do not be rude.

H. Be confident without being arrogant.

I. A fair game is more important than the wishes of players, coaches, or the umpire.

3. UMPIRE MECHANICS

A. Establish a good line of sight.

B. Visualize the strike zone. The strike zone is:

1. That area over home plate, the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants (commonly referred to as the letters), and the lower level is a line at the top of the knees.
2. The Strike Zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball.

C. Avoid making the call too quickly.

D. Proper strike call mechanics make the difference:

1. Have proper timing.
2. First strike call should be loud.
3. Second strike call should be louder.
4. Third strike call with emphasis should be the loudest.
5. When calling a ball, call it loud enough for all players to hear, but not as loud as a strike.

E. Use good judgment:

1. Umpires are respected if they are known for exercising good judgment and consistency.

F. Avoid confusing or unclear fair-foul calls:

1. A **fair ball** is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or touches first, second or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while in flight, passes out of the playing field in flight.
2. A **foul ball** is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that, while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
3. Use completely different gestures for fair and foul calls.
4. React immediately to a batted ball which hits the batter by throwing your arms up and calling, 'FOUL'.
5. Indicate foul tips by brushing your hands over each other two or three times.

G. Stay on top of a slow roller:

1. Don't hesitate.
2. Get out from behind the plate.

H. Be alert to a play at home base:

1. Remove your mask.
2. Set yourself at a right angle to the throw.
3. The tagging player must retain possession.
4. When the play is complete, clearly emphasize your call.
5. On a play at home base, a runner is out when, in running or sliding for home base, he fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision. If no appeal is made, the runner is safe.