

OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

2021 Edition





Official Baseball Rules
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FOREWORD

This code of rules governs the playing of baseball games by professional teams of Major League Baseball and any league within the professional development league system operated by Major League Baseball in which Minor League Clubs are assigned to compete.

We recognize that many amateur and non-professional organizations play their games under professional rules and we are happy to make our rules available as widely as possible. It is well to remember that specifications as to fields, equipment, etc., may be modified to meet the needs of each group.

Money fines, long-term suspensions and similar penalties imposed by this code are not practicable for amateur groups, but officers and umpires of such organizations should insist on strict observance of all the rules governing the playing of the game.

Baseball not only has maintained its position as the National Game of the United States, but also has become an International Game being played in more than 100 countries. The popularity of the game will grow only so long as its players, managers, coaches, umpires and administrative officers respect the discipline of its code of rules.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- (1) The 2021 Official Baseball Rules do not include any of the rules that were adopted exclusively for the 2021 Major League season, which are contained in Section 5.1 of the MLB 2021 Operations Manual. To the extent of a conflict between the Official Baseball Rules and Section 5.1 of the Operations Manual, the Operations Manual shall control for Major League play.
- (2) The Playing Rules Committee, at its December 2014 meeting, voted to reorganize and recodify the Official Baseball Rules into a more logical and organized manner. No wording or language was changed (other than the amendments made for that year); only the order and placement of the rules were modified. In this edition Comments to the Official Rules are highlighted in a shaded box rather than being printed in smaller typeface as had been the case in prior to 2015.
- (3) The Playing Rules Committee, at its December 1977 meeting, voted to incorporate the Notes/Case Book/Comments section directly into the Official Baseball Rules at the appropriate places. Basically, the Case Book interprets or elaborates on the basic rules and in essence have the same effect as rules when applied to particular sections for which they are intended.

This arrangement is designed to give quicker access to any written language pertaining to an Official Rule and does not require a reader to refer to different sections of the Official Baseball Rules book in considering the application of a particular rule.

Case Book material in this edition are in shaded boxes and are labeled as “Comment.”

Summary of Rule Changes for 2021

The Official Playing Rules Committee made the following changes that will be in effect for the 2021 season:

- Amended Rule 6.01(a)(1) to include situations where a dropped pitch (not on a third strike) is inadvertently deflected.

Additional Changes for 2021

All references to the National Association, Minor League Presidents, and any associated terms have been changed to reflect the new relationship between Major League Baseball and any league within the professional development league system operated by Major League Baseball in which Minor League Clubs are assigned to compete.

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Rule 1.01 to 1.06

1.00–OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

- 1.01** Baseball is a game between two teams of nine players each, under direction of a manager, played on an enclosed field in accordance with these rules, under jurisdiction of one or more umpires.
- 1.02** The offensive team's objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.
- 1.03** The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.
- 1.04** When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally he shall score one run for his team.
- 1.05** The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent.
- 1.06** The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

Rule 2.01

2.00—THE PLAYING FIELD

2.01 Layout of the Field

The field shall be laid out according to the instructions below, supplemented by the diagrams in Appendices 1, 2, and 3.

The infield shall be a 90-foot square. The outfield shall be the area between two foul lines formed by extending two sides of the square, as in diagram in Appendix 1 (page 158). The distance from home base to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on fair territory shall be 250 feet or more. A distance of 320 feet or more along the foul lines, and 400 feet or more to center field is preferable. The infield shall be graded so that the base lines and home plate are level. The pitcher's plate shall be 10 inches above the level of home plate. The degree of slope from a point 6 inches in front of the pitcher's plate to a point 6 feet toward home plate shall be 1 inch to 1 foot, and such degree of slope shall be uniform. The infield and outfield, including the boundary lines, are fair territory and all other area is foul territory.

It is desirable that the line from home base through the pitcher's plate to second base shall run East-Northeast.

It is recommended that the distance from home base to the backstop, and from the base lines to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on foul territory shall be 60 feet or more. *See Appendix 1.*

When location of home base is determined, with a steel tape measure 127 feet, $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches in desired direction to establish second base. From home base, measure 90 feet toward first base; from second base, measure 90 feet toward first base; the intersection of these lines establishes first base. From home base, measure 90 feet toward third base; from second base, measure 90 feet toward third base; the intersection of these lines establishes third base. The distance between first base and third base is 127 feet, $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches. All measurements from home base shall be taken from the point where the first and third base lines intersect.

The catcher's box, the batters' boxes, the coaches' boxes, the three-foot first base lines and the next batter's boxes shall be laid out as shown in the diagrams in Appendices 1 and 2.

Rule 2.01 to 2.03

The foul lines and all other playing lines indicated in the diagrams by solid black lines shall be marked with paint or non-toxic and non-burning chalk or other white material.

The grass lines and dimensions shown on the diagrams are those used in many fields, but they are not mandatory and each Club shall determine the size and shape of the grassed and bare areas of its playing field.

NOTE: (a) Any Playing Field constructed by a professional Club after June 1, 1958, shall provide a minimum distance of 325 feet from home base to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on the right and left field foul lines, and a minimum distance of 400 feet to the center field fence.

(b) No existing playing field shall be remodeled after June 1, 1958, in such manner as to reduce the distance from home base to the foul poles and to the center field fence below the minimum specified in paragraph (a) above.

2.02 Home Base

Home base shall be marked by a five-sided slab of whitened rubber. It shall be a 17-inch square with two of the corners removed so that one edge is 17 inches long, two adjacent sides are 8½ inches and the remaining two sides are 12 inches and set at an angle to make a point. It shall be set in the ground with the point at the intersection of the lines extending from home base to first base and to third base; with the 17-inch edge facing the pitcher's plate, and the two 12-inch edges coinciding with the first and third base lines. The top edges of home base shall be beveled and the base shall be fixed in the ground level with the ground surface. (*See drawing D in Appendix 2.*)

2.03 The Bases

First, second and third bases shall be marked by white canvas or rubber-covered bags, securely attached to the ground as indicated in Diagram 2. The first and third base bags shall be entirely within the infield. The second base bag shall be centered on second base. The bags shall be 15 inches square, not less than three nor more than five inches thick, and filled with soft material.

Rule 2.04 to 2.05

2.04 The Pitcher's Plate

The pitcher's plate shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber, 24 inches by 6 inches. It shall be set in the ground as shown in Diagrams 1 and 2, so that the distance between the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be 60 feet, 6 inches.

2.05 Benches

The home Club shall furnish players' benches, one each for the home and visiting teams. Such benches shall not be less than twenty-five feet from the base lines. They shall be roofed and shall be enclosed at the back and ends.

Rule 3.01 to 3.02(c)

3.00—EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

3.01 The Ball

The ball shall be a sphere formed by yarn wound around a small core of cork, rubber or similar material, covered with two strips of white horsehide or cowhide, tightly stitched together. It shall weigh not less than five nor more than 5¼ ounces avoirdupois and measure not less than nine nor more than 9¼ inches in circumference.

No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sand-paper, emery-paper or other foreign substance.

PENALTY: The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the game. In addition, the offender shall be suspended automatically for 10 games. For rules in regard to a pitcher defacing the ball, *see* Rules 6.02(c)(2) through (6).

Rule 3.01 Comment: Should a ball come partially apart in a game, it is in play until the play is completed.

3.02 The Bat

(a) The bat shall be a smooth, round stick not more than 2.61 inches in diameter at the thickest part and not more than 42 inches in length. The bat shall be one piece of solid wood.

NOTE: No laminated or experimental bats shall be used in a professional game (either championship season or exhibition games) until the manufacturer has secured approval from the Rules Committee of his design and methods of manufacture.

(b) Cupped Bats. An indentation in the end of the bat up to 1¼ inches in depth is permitted and may be no wider than two inches and no less than one inch in diameter. The indentation must be curved with no foreign substance added.

(c) The bat handle, for not more than 18 inches from its end, may be covered or treated with any material or substance to improve the grip. Any such material or substance that extends past the 18-inch limitation shall cause the bat to be removed from the game.

Rule 3.02(c) to 3.03(f)

NOTE: If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to (c) above until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out, or ejected from the game.

Rule 3.02(c) Comment: If pine tar extends past the 18-inch limitation, then the umpire, on his own initiative or if alerted by the opposing team, shall order the batter to use a different bat. The batter may use the bat later in the game only if the excess substance is removed. If no objections are raised prior to a bat's use, then a violation of Rule 3.02(c) on that play does not nullify any action or play on the field.

(d) No colored bat may be used in a professional game unless approved by the Rules Committee.

3.03 Player Uniforms

(a) All players on a team shall wear uniforms identical in color, trim and style, and all players' uniforms shall include minimal six-inch numbers on their backs.

(b) Any part of an undershirt exposed to view shall be of a uniform solid color for all players on a team. Any player other than the pitcher may have numbers, and/or letters, insignia attached to the sleeve of the undershirt.

(c) No player whose uniform does not conform to that of his teammates shall be permitted to participate in a game.

(d) A league may provide that each team shall wear a distinctive uniform at all times, or that each team shall have two sets of uniforms, white for home games and a different color for road games.

(e) Sleeve lengths may vary for individual players, but the sleeves of each individual player shall be approximately the same length; no player shall wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves; and no pitcher shall wear sleeves that are white, gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner.

(f) No player shall attach to his uniform tape or other material of different color from his uniform.

Rule 3.03(g) to 3.05

- (g) No part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball.
- (h) Glass buttons and polished metal shall not be used on a uniform.
- (i) No player shall attach anything to the heel or toe of his shoe other than the ordinary shoe plate or toe plate. Shoes with pointed spikes similar to golf or track shoes shall not be worn.
- (j) No part of the uniform shall include patches or designs relating to commercial advertisements.
- (k) A league may provide that the uniforms of its member teams include the names of its players on their backs. Any name other than the last name of the player must be approved by the Office of the Commissioner. If adopted, all uniforms for a team must have the names of its players.

3.04 Catcher's Mitt

The catcher may wear a leather mitt not more than thirty-eight inches in circumference, nor more than fifteen and one-half inches from top to bottom. Such limits shall include all lacing and any leather band or facing attached to the outer edge of the mitt. The space between the thumb section and the finger section of the mitt shall not exceed six inches at the top of the mitt and four inches at the base of the thumb crotch. The web shall measure not more than seven inches across the top or more than six inches from its top to the base of the thumb crotch. The web may be either a lacing, lacing through leather tunnels, or a center piece of leather which may be an extension of the palm, connected to the mitt with lacing and constructed so that it will not exceed any of the above mentioned measurements.

3.05 First Baseman's Glove

The first baseman may wear a leather glove or mitt not more than thirteen inches long from top to bottom and not more than eight inches wide across the palm, measured from the base of the thumb crotch to the outer edge of the mitt. The space between the thumb section and the finger section of the mitt shall not exceed four inches at the top of the mitt and three and one-half inches at the base of the thumb crotch. The mitt shall be constructed so that this space is

Rule 3.05 to 3.06

permanently fixed and cannot be enlarged, extended, widened, or deepened by the use of any materials or process whatsoever. The web of the mitt shall measure not more than five inches from its top to the base of the thumb crotch. The web may be either a lacing, lacing through leather tunnels, or a center piece of leather which may be an extension of the palm connected to the mitt with lacing and constructed so that it will not exceed the above mentioned measurements. The webbing shall not be constructed of wound or wrapped lacing or deepened to make a net type of trap. The glove may be of any weight.

3.06 Fielding Gloves

Each fielder, other than the catcher, may use or wear a leather glove. The measurements covering size of glove shall be made by measuring front side or ball receiving side of glove. The tool or measuring tape shall be placed to contact the surface or feature of item being measured and follow all contours in the process. The glove shall not measure more than 13 inches from the tip of any one of the 4 fingers, through the ball pocket to the bottom edge or heel of glove. The glove shall not measure more than $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide, measured from the inside seam at base of first finger, along base of other fingers, to the outside edge of little finger edge of glove. The space or area between the thumb and first finger, called crotch, may be filled with leather webbing or back stop. The webbing may be constructed of two plies of standard leather to close the crotch area entirely, or it may be constructed of a series of tunnels made of leather, or a series of panels of leather, or of lacing leather thongs. The webbing may not be constructed of wound or wrapped lacing to make a net type of trap. When webbing is made to cover entire crotch area, the webbing can be constructed so as to be flexible. When constructed of a series of sections, they must be joined together. These sections may not be so constructed to allow depression to be developed by curvatures in the section sides. The webbing shall be made to control the size of the crotch opening. The crotch opening shall measure not more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the top, not more than $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep, and shall be $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide at its bottom. The opening of the crotch shall not be more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches at any point below its top. The webbing shall be secured at each

Rule 3.06 to 3.08(f)

side, and at top and bottom of crotch. The attachment is to be made with leather lacing, these connections to be secured. If they stretch or become loose, they shall be adjusted to their proper condition. The glove can be of any weight. *See* Appendix 4 for diagram of glove dimensions.

3.07 Pitcher's Glove

- (a) The pitcher's glove may not, exclusive of piping, be white, gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner. No fielder, regardless of position, may use a fielding glove that falls within a PANTONE[®] color set lighter than the current 14-series.
- (b) No pitcher shall attach to his glove any foreign material of a color different from the glove.
- (c) The umpire-in-chief shall cause a glove that violates Rules 3.07(a) or (b) to be removed from the game, either on his own initiative, at the recommendation of another umpire or upon complaint of the opposing manager that the umpire-in-chief agrees has merit.

3.08 Helmets

A Professional League shall adopt the following rule pertaining to the use of helmets:

- (a) All players shall use some type of protective helmet while at bat and while running the bases.
- (b) All players in the Minor Leagues shall wear a double ear-flap helmet while at bat.
- (c) All Major League players must wear a single ear-flap helmet (or at the player's option, a double ear-flap helmet).
- (d) All catchers shall wear a catcher's protective helmet and face mask while receiving a pitch.
- (e) All base coaches shall wear a protective helmet while performing their duties.
- (f) All bat/ball boys or girls shall wear a double ear-flap protective helmet while performing their duties.

Rule 3.08 to 3.10(b)

Rule 3.08 Comment: If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he shall direct the violation to be corrected. If the violation is not corrected within a reasonable time, in the umpire's judgment, the umpire shall eject the offender from the game, and disciplinary action, as appropriate, will be recommended.

3.09 Undue Commercialization

Playing equipment including but not limited to the bases, pitcher's plate, baseball, bats, uniforms, catcher's mitts, first baseman's gloves, infielders' and outfielders' gloves and protective helmets, as detailed in the provisions of this rule, shall not contain any undue commercialization of the product. Designations by the manufacturer on any such equipment must be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name of the item. The provisions of this Rule 3.09 shall apply to professional leagues only.

NOTE: Manufacturers who plan innovative changes in baseball equipment for professional baseball leagues should submit same to the Official Playing Rules Committee prior to production.

3.10 Equipment on the Field

- (a) Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.
- (b) The use of any markers on the field that create a tangible reference system on the field is prohibited.

Rule 4.01 to 4.01(e)

4.00–GAME PRELIMINARIES

4.01 Umpire Duties

Before the game begins the umpire shall:

- (a) Require strict observance of all rules governing implements of play and equipment of players;
- (b) Be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on Appendices No. 1 and No. 2) are marked with lime, chalk or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;
- (c) Receive from the home Club a supply of regulation baseballs, the number and make to be certified to the home Club by the Office of the Commissioner. The umpire shall inspect the baseballs and ensure they are regulation baseballs and that they are properly rubbed so that the gloss is removed. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls to be used in the game;
- (d) Be assured by the home Club that at least one dozen regulation reserve balls are immediately available for use if required;
- (e) Have in his possession at least two alternate balls and shall require replenishment of such supply of alternate balls as needed throughout the game. Such alternate balls shall be put in play when:
 - (1) A ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the spectator area;
 - (2) A ball has become discolored or unfit for further use;
 - (3) The pitcher requests such alternate ball.

Rule 4.01(e) Comment: The umpire shall not give an alternate ball to the pitcher until play has ended and the previously used ball is dead. After a thrown or batted ball goes out of the playing field, play shall not be resumed with an alternate ball until the runners have reached the bases to which they are entitled. After a home run is hit out of the playing grounds, the umpire shall not deliver a new ball to the pitcher or the catcher until the batter hitting the home run has crossed the plate.

Rule 4.01(f) to 4.03(c)

- (f) Ensure that an official rosin bag is placed on the ground behind the pitcher's plate prior to the start of each game.
- (g) The umpire-in-chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in his opinion darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

4.02 Field Manager

- (a) The Club shall designate the manager to the Office of the Commissioner or the umpire-in-chief not less than thirty minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game.
- (b) The manager may advise the umpire-in-chief that he has delegated specific duties prescribed by the rules to a player or coach, and any action of such designated representative shall be official. The manager shall always be responsible for his team's conduct, observance of the official rules, and deference to the umpires.
- (c) If a manager leaves the field, he shall designate a player or coach as his substitute, and such substitute manager shall have the duties, rights and responsibilities of the manager. If the manager fails or refuses to designate his substitute before leaving, the umpire-in-chief shall designate a team member as substitute manager.

4.03 Exchange of Lineup Cards

Unless the home Club shall have given previous notice that the game has been postponed or will be delayed in starting, the umpire, or umpires, shall enter the playing field five minutes before the hour set for the game to begin and proceed directly to home base where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams. In sequence:

- (a) First, the home manager, or his designee, shall give his batting order to the umpire-in-chief, in duplicate.
- (b) Next, the visiting manager, or his designee, shall give his batting order to the umpire-in-chief, in duplicate.
- (c) As a courtesy, each lineup card presented to the umpire-in-chief

Rule 4.03(c) to 4.03(d)

should list the fielding positions to be played by each player in the batting order. If a designated hitter is to be used, the lineup card shall designate which hitter is to be the designated hitter. *See* Rule 5.11(a). As a courtesy, potential substitute players should also be listed, but the failure to list a potential substitute player shall not make such potential substitute player ineligible to enter the game.

In accordance with Major League Rule 2(b)(2), each Major League Club must designate on its lineup card in advance of that game each player eligible to play in the game as a pitcher, a position player, or a “Two-Way Player”, as follows:

- (1) From Opening Day through August 31 of the championship season and during postseason games, Major League Clubs may designate a maximum of 13 pitchers for a game.
 - (2) From September 1 through the end of the championship season (including any tiebreaker games), Major League Clubs may designate a maximum of 14 pitchers for a game.
 - (3) Players who qualify as “Two-Way Players” under Major League Rule 2(b)(2) may appear as pitchers during a game without counting toward a Club’s pitcher limitations.
 - (4) No player on the lineup card other than those designated as Two-Way players or pitchers by the Club may appear in a championship season or postseason game as a pitcher, except that any player may appear as a pitcher following the 9th inning of an extra inning game, or in any game in which his team is losing or winning by equal to or more than 6 runs when the player enters as a pitcher; provided, however, that any player added to the Active List as a 27th Player prior to September 1 shall not count toward the maximum of 13 pitchers.
- (d) The umpire-in-chief shall make certain that the original and copies of the respective batting orders are identical, and then tender a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting

Rule 4.03(d) to 4.03(e)

order. The tender of the batting order by the umpire shall establish the batting orders. Thereafter, no substitutions shall be made by either manager, except as provided in the rules.

- (e) As soon as the home team's batting order is handed to the umpire-in-chief the umpires are in charge of the playing field and from that moment the umpire-in-chief shall have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, suspended or resumed on account of weather or the condition of the playing field. The umpire-in-chief shall not call the game until at least 30 minutes after he has suspended play. The umpire-in-chief may continue the suspension so long as he believes there is any chance to resume play. Nothing in this Rule is intended to affect a Club's ability to suspend or resume any game pursuant to a policy governing severe weather, significant weather threats, and lightning safety that has been filed with the league office prior to the championship season.

Rule 4.03 Comment: Obvious errors in the batting order, which are noticed by the umpire-in-chief before he calls "Play" for the start of the game, should be called to the attention of the manager or captain of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. For example, if a manager has inadvertently listed only eight men in the batting order, or has listed two players with the same last name but without an identifying initial and the errors are noticed by the umpire before he calls "play," he shall cause such error or errors to be corrected before he calls "play" to start the game. Teams should not be "trapped" later by some mistake that obviously was inadvertent and which can be corrected before the game starts.

The umpire-in-chief shall at all times try to complete a game. His authority to resume play following one or more suspensions of as much as 30 minutes each shall be absolute and he shall terminate a game only when there appears to be no possibility of completing it.

The Major Leagues have determined that Rule 4.03(e) does not apply to any Wild Card, Division Series, League Championship Series or World Series games or for any additional Major League championship season game played to break a tie.

Rule 4.04 to 4.05

4.04 Weather and Field Conditions

- (a) The home team shall be the sole judge as to whether a game shall not be started because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field, except for the second game of a conventional or split doubleheader. Nothing in this Rule is intended to affect a Club's ability to suspend or resume any game pursuant to a policy governing severe weather, significant weather threats, and lightning safety that has been filed with the league office prior to the championship season.

EXCEPTION: The Office of the Commissioner may suspend the application of this rule as to a League or Leagues during the closing weeks of the championship season in order to assure that the championship is decided each year on its merits. When the postponement of, and possible failure to play, a game in the final series of a championship season between any two teams might affect the final standing of any Club in the league, the Office of the Commissioner, on appeal from any league Club, may assume the authority granted the home team by this rule.

- (b) The umpire-in-chief of the first game shall be the sole judge as to whether the second game of a conventional or split doubleheader shall not be started because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field.
- (c) A postponed game shall be a "No Game" and shall be treated in the same manner as a game called before it has become a regulation game within the meaning of Rule 7.01(e).

4.05 Special Ground Rules

The manager of the home team shall present to the umpire-in-chief and the opposing manager any ground rules he thinks necessary covering the overflow of spectators upon the playing field, batted or thrown balls into such overflow, or any other contingencies. If these rules are acceptable to the opposing manager they shall be legal. If these rules are unacceptable to the opposing manager, the umpire-in-chief shall make and enforce any special ground rules he thinks are made necessary by ground conditions, which shall not conflict with the official playing rules.

Rule 4.06 to 4.08(c)

4.06 No Fraternization

Players in uniform shall not address or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands before, during, or after a game. No manager, coach or player shall address any spectator before or during a game. Players of opposing teams shall not fraternize at any time while in uniform.

4.07 Security

- (a) No person shall be allowed on the playing field during a game except players and coaches in uniform, managers, news photographers authorized by the home team, umpires, officers of the law in uniform and watchmen or other employees of the home Club.
- (b) The home team shall provide police protection sufficient to preserve order. If a person, or persons, enter the playing field during a game and interfere in any way with the play, the visiting team may refuse to play until the field is cleared.

PENALTY: If the field is not cleared in a reasonable length of time, which shall in no case be less than 15 minutes after the visiting team's refusal to play, the umpire-in-chief may forfeit the game to the visiting team.

4.08 Doubleheaders

- (a) (1) Only two championship games shall be played on one date. Completion of a suspended game shall not violate this rule, except for games in the Minor Leagues. *See* Rule 7.02(b) Comment.
- (2) If two games are scheduled to be played for one admission on one date, the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game for that date.
- (b) After the start of the first game of a conventional or split doubleheader, that game shall be completed before the second game of the doubleheader shall begin.
- (c) The second game of a doubleheader shall start thirty minutes after the first game is completed, unless a longer interval (not

Rule 4.08(c) to 4.08(g)

to exceed forty-five minutes) is declared by the umpire-in-chief and announced to the opposing managers at the end of the first game.

EXCEPTION: If the Office of the Commissioner has approved a request of the home Club for a longer interval between games for some special event, the umpire-in-chief shall declare such longer interval and announce it to the opposing managers. The umpire-in-chief of the first game shall be the timekeeper controlling the interval between games.

- (d) The umpire shall start the second game of a doubleheader, if at all possible, and play shall continue as long as ground conditions, local time restrictions, or weather permit.
- (e) When a regularly scheduled doubleheader is delayed in starting for any cause, any game that is started is the first game of the doubleheader.
- (f) When a rescheduled game is part of a doubleheader the rescheduled game shall be the second game, and the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game for that date.
- (g) Between games of a doubleheader, or whenever a game is suspended because of the unfitness of the playing field, the umpire-in-chief shall have control of ground-keepers and assistants for the purpose of making the playing field fit for play.

PENALTY: For violation, the umpire-in-chief may forfeit the game to the visiting team.

Rule 5.01 to 5.03(c)

5.00–PLAYING THE GAME

5.01 Starting the Game (“Play Ball!”)

- (a) At the time set for beginning the game the players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first batter of the visiting team shall take his position in the batter’s box, the umpire-in-chief shall call “Play,” and the game shall start.
- (b) After the umpire calls “Play” the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until for legal cause, or at the umpire’s call of “Time” suspending play, the ball becomes dead.
- (c) The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as he chooses.

5.02 Fielding Positions

When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be on fair territory.

- (a) The catcher shall station himself directly back of the plate. He may leave his position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher’s box until the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand.

PENALTY: Balk.

- (b) The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take his legal position;
- (c) Except the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may station himself anywhere in fair territory.

5.03 Base Coaches

- (a) The team at bat shall station two base coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base.
- (b) Base coaches shall be limited to two in number and shall be in team uniform.
- (c) Base coaches must remain within the coach’s box consistent

Rule 5.03(c) to 5.04(b)(2)

with this Rule, except that a coach who has a play at his base may leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance or return to a base if the coach does not interfere with the play in any manner. Other than exchanging equipment, all base coaches shall refrain from physically touching base runners, especially when signs are being given.

PENALTY: If a coach has positioned himself closer to home plate than the coach's box or closer to fair territory than the coach's box before a batted ball passes the coach, the umpire shall, upon complaint by the opposing manager, strictly enforce the rule. The umpire shall warn the coach and instruct him to return to the box. If the coach does not return to the box he shall be removed from the game. In addition, coaches who violate this Rule may be subject to discipline by the Office of the Commissioner.

5.04 Batting

(a) Batting Order

- (1) Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that his name appears in his team's batting order.
- (2) The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. In that case the substitute shall take the place of the replaced player in the batting order.
- (3) The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed his time at bat in the preceding inning.

(b) The Batter's Box

- (1) The batter shall take his position in the batter's box promptly when it is his time at bat.
- (2) The batter shall not leave his position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts his windup.

PENALTY: If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "Ball" or "Strike," as the case may be.

Rule 5.04(b)(2)

Rule 5.04(b)(2) Comment: The batter leaves the batter's box at the risk of having a strike delivered and called, unless he requests the umpire to call "Time." The batter is not at liberty to step in and out of the batter's box at will.

Once a batter has taken his position in the batter's box, he shall not be permitted to step out of the batter's box in order to use the rosin or the pine tar rag, unless there is a delay in the game action or, in the judgment of the umpires, weather conditions warrant an exception.

Umpires will not call "Time" at the request of the batter or any member of his team once the pitcher has started his windup or has come to a set position even though the batter claims "dust in his eyes," "steamed glasses," "didn't get the sign" or for any other cause.

Umpires may grant a hitter's request for "Time" once he is in the batter's box, but the umpire should eliminate hitters walking out of the batter's box without reason. If umpires are not lenient, batters will understand that they are in the batter's box and they must remain there until the ball is pitched. *See* Rule 5.04(b)(4).

If pitcher delays once the batter is in his box and the umpire feels that the delay is not justified he may allow the batter to step out of the box momentarily.

If after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to a "set position" with a runner on, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has inadvertently caused the pitcher to interrupt his delivery, it shall not be called a balk. Both the pitcher and batter have violated a rule and the umpire shall call time and both the batter and pitcher start over from "scratch."

The following paragraph is additional material for Rule 5.04(b)(2) Comment, for Minor League play:

If after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to a "set position" with a runner on, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has stepped out of the box, the umpire shall not call a balk. Such action by the batter shall be treated as a violation of the Batter's Box Rule and shall subject a batter to the penalties set forth in Rule 5.04(b)(4)(A).

Rule 5.04(b)(3) to 5.04(b)(4)

- (3) If the batter refuses to take his position in the batter's box during his time at bat, the umpire shall call a strike on the batter. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. After the penalty, the batter may take his proper position and the regular ball and strike count shall continue. If the batter does not take his proper position before three strikes have been called, the batter shall be declared out.

Rule 5.04(b)(3) Comment: The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike pursuant to Rule 5.04(b)(3) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 5.04(b)(3).

(4) The Batter's Box Rule

- (A) The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:
- (i) The batter swings at a pitch;
 - (ii) An attempted check swing is appealed to a base umpire;
 - (iii) The batter is forced off balance or out of the batter's box by a pitch;
 - (iv) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";
 - (v) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;
 - (vi) The batter feints a bunt;
 - (vii) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;
 - (viii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball;
or
 - (ix) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

Rule 5.04(b)(4) to 5.05(a)(2)

If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed in Rule 5.04(b)(4) (A)(i) through (ix) applies, the umpire shall issue a warning to the batter for the batter's first violation of this Rule in a game. For a batter's second or subsequent violations of this Rule in a game, the Office of the Commissioner may issue an appropriate discipline. In Minor League play, for a batter's second or subsequent violations of this Rule in a game, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

(B) The batter may leave the batter's box and the dirt area surrounding home plate when "Time" is called for the purpose or as a result of

- (i) an injury or potential injury;
- (ii) making a substitution; or
- (iii) a conference by either team.

Rule 5.04(b)(4)(B) Comment: Umpires shall encourage the on-deck batter to take a position in the batter's box quickly after the previous batter reaches base or is put out.

(5) The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box.

APPROVED RULING: The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

(c) Completing Time at Bat

A batter has legally completed his time at bat when he is put out or becomes a runner.

5.05 When the Batter Becomes a Runner

(a) The batter becomes a runner when:

- (1) He hits a fair ball;

Rule 5.05(a) Comment: If the batter hits a pitch that touches the ground first, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he hit the ball in flight.

- (2) The third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied, or (2) first base is occupied with two out;

Rule 5.05(a)(2) to 5.05(a)(8)

Rule 5.05(a)(2) Comment: A batter who does not realize his situation on a third strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt circle surrounding home plate.

- (3) If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a “ball.” If such a pitch touches the batter, he shall be awarded first base. If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught, for the purposes of Rule 5.05(b) and 5.09(a)(3).
- (4) A fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, shall touch an umpire or runner on fair territory;
- (5) A fair ball passes over a fence or into the stands at a distance from home base of 250 feet or more. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when he shall have touched all bases legally. A fair fly ball that passes out of the playing field at a point less than 250 feet from home base shall entitle the batter to advance to second base only;
- (6) A fair ball, after touching the ground, bounds into the stands, or passes through, over or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;
- (7) Any fair ball which, either before or after touching the ground, passes through or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through any opening in the fence or scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, or which sticks in a fence or scoreboard, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to two bases;
- (8) Any bounding fair ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

Rule 5.05(a)(9) to 5.05(b)(2)

- (9) Any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run. However, should such a fair fly be deflected at a point less than 250 feet from home plate, the batter shall be entitled to two bases only.
- (b) The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided he advances to and touches first base) when:
- (1) Four “balls” have been called by the umpire;

Rule 5.05(b)(1) Comment: A batter who is entitled to first base because of a base on balls, including an award of first base to a batter by an umpire following a signal from a manager, must go to first base and touch the base before other base runners are forced to advance. This applies when bases are full and applies when a substitute runner is put into the game.

If, in advancing, the base runner thinks there is a play and he slides past the base before or after touching it he may be put out by the fielder tagging him. If he fails to touch the base to which he is entitled and attempts to advance beyond that base he may be put out by tagging him or the base he missed.

- (2) He is touched by a pitched ball which he is not attempting to hit unless (A) The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or (B) The batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball;

If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if he makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

APPROVED RULING: When the batter is touched by a pitched ball which does not entitle him to first base, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

Rule 5.05(b)(2) to 5.05(b)(3)

Rule 5.05(b)(2) Comment: A batter shall not be considered touched by a pitched ball if the ball only touches any jewelry being worn by a player (e.g., necklaces, bracelets, etc.).

- (3) The catcher or any fielder interferes with him. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.

Rule 5.05(b)(3) Comment: If catcher's interference is called with a play in progress the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first base, or a runner misses his next base, he shall be considered as having reached the base, as stated in Note of Rule 5.06(b)(3)(D).

Examples of plays the manager might elect to take:

1. Runner on third, one out, batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher's interference was called. The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have runner remain at third and batter awarded first base.
2. Runner on second base. Catcher interferes with batter as he bunts ball fairly sending runner to third base. The manager may rather have runner on third base with an out on the play than have runners on second and first.

If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 6.01(g).

If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 5.05(b)(3). In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter start over from "scratch."

Rule 5.05(b)(4) to 5.06(b)(3)

- (4) A fair ball touches an umpire or a runner on fair territory before touching a fielder.

If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

5.06 Running the Bases

(a) Occupying the Base

- (1) A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when he touches it before he is out. He is then entitled to it until he is put out, or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base.

Rule 5.06(a)/5.06(c) Comment: If a runner legally acquires title to a base, and the pitcher assumes his pitching position, the runner may not return to a previously occupied base.

- (2) Two runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching a base, the following runner shall be out when tagged and the preceding runner is entitled to the base, unless Rule 5.06(b)(2) applies.

(b) Advancing Bases

- (1) In advancing, a runner shall touch first, second, third and home base in order. If forced to return, he shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under any provision of Rule 5.06(c). In such cases, the runner may go directly to his original base.
- (2) If a runner is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner and two runners are touching a base to which the following runner is forced, the following runner is entitled to the base and the preceding runner shall be out when tagged or when a fielder possesses the ball and touches the base to which such preceding runner is forced.
- (3) Each runner, other than the batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one base when:

Rule 5.06(b)(3)

- (A) There is a balk;
- (B) The batter's advance without liability to be put out forces the runner to vacate his base, or when the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance;

Rule 5.06(b)(3)(B) Comment: A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out may advance past the base to which he is entitled only at his peril. If such a runner, forced to advance, is put out for the third out before a preceding runner, also forced to advance, touches home plate, the run shall score.

Play. Two out, bases full, batter walks but runner from second is overzealous and runs past third base toward home and is tagged out on a throw by the catcher. Even though two are out, the run would score on the theory that the run was forced home by the base on balls and that all the runners needed to do was proceed and touch the next base.

- (C) A fielder, after catching a fly ball, steps or falls into any out-of-play area;

Rule 5.06(b)(3)(C) Comment: If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should step or fall into any out-of-play area, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder entered such out-of-play area.

- (D) While he is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.

NOTE: When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches the base to which he is entitled, and the runner fails to touch the base to which he is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit his exemption from liability to be put out, and he may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before he returns to the missed base;

Rule 5.06(b)(3) to 5.06(b)(4)

- (E) A fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play, and the award is made from the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.
- (4) Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:
- (A) To home base, scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and he touched all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire's judgment, would have gone out of the playing field in flight, is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing his glove, cap, or any article of his apparel;
 - (B) Three bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a fair ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;
 - (C) Three bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;
 - (D) Two bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play;
 - (E) Two bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a thrown ball. The ball is in play;

Rule 5.06(b)(4)(B) through (E) Comment: In applying (B-C-D-E) the umpire must rule that the thrown glove or detached cap or mask has touched the ball. There is no penalty if the ball is not touched.

Under (C-E) this penalty shall not be invoked against a fielder whose glove is carried off his hand by the force of a batted or thrown ball, or when his glove flies off his hand as he makes an obvious effort to make a legitimate catch.

Rule 5.06(b)(4)

- (F) Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery or vines;
- (G) Two bases when, with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field), or over or under or through a field fence, or on a slanting part of the screen above the backstop, or remains in the meshes of a wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made;

APPROVED RULING: If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

Rule 5.06(b)(4)(G) Comment: In certain circumstances it is impossible to award a runner two bases. Example: Runner on first. Batter hits fly to short right. Runner holds up between first and second and batter comes around first and pulls up behind him. Ball falls safely. Outfielder, in throwing to first, throws ball into stands.

APPROVED RULING: Since no runner, when the ball is dead, may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled, the runner originally on first base goes to third base and the batter is held at second base.

The term “when the wild throw was made” means when the throw actually left the player’s hand and not when the thrown

Rule 5.06(b)(4)

ball hit the ground, passes a receiving fielder or goes out of play into the stands.

The position of the batter-runner at the time the wild throw left the thrower's hand is the key in deciding the award of bases. If the batter-runner has not reached first base, the award is two bases at the time the pitch was made for all runners. The decision as to whether the batter-runner has reached first base before the throw is a judgment call.

If an unusual play arises where a first throw by an infielder goes into stands or dugout but the batter did not become a runner (such as catcher throwing ball into stands in attempt to get runner from third trying to score on passed ball or wild pitch) award of two bases shall be from the position of the runners at the time of the throw. (For the purpose of Rule 5.06(b)(4)(G) a catcher is considered an infielder.)

PLAY—Runner on first base, batter hits a ball to the shortstop, who throws to second base too late to get runner at second, and second baseman throws toward first base after batter has crossed first base.

RULING: Runner at second scores. (On this play, only if batter-runner is past first base when throw is made is he awarded third base.)

- (H) One base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead;

APPROVED RULING: When a wild pitch or passed ball goes through or by the catcher, or deflects off the catcher, and goes directly into the dugout, stands, above the break, or any area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be one base. One base shall also be awarded if the pitcher while in contact with the rubber, throws to a base, and the throw goes directly into the stands or into any area where the ball is dead.

Rule 5.06(b)(4) to 5.06(c)(2)

If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder, and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout, stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw.

- (I) One base, if the batter becomes a runner on Ball Four or Strike Three, when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia.

If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch which entitles the runners to advance one base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first base only.

Rule 5.06(b)(4)(I) Comment: The fact a runner is awarded a base or bases without liability to be put out does not relieve him of the responsibility to touch the base he is awarded and all intervening bases. For example: Batter hits a ground ball which an infielder throws into the stands but the batter-runner missed first base. He may be called out on appeal for missing first base after the ball is put in play even though he was "awarded" second base.

If a runner is forced to return to a base after a catch, he must retouch his original base even though, because of some ground rule or other rule, he is awarded additional bases. He may retouch while the ball is dead and the award is then made from his original base.

(c) Dead Balls

The ball becomes dead and runners advance one base, or return to their bases, without liability to be put out, when:

- (1) A pitched ball touches a batter, or his clothing, while in his legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance;
- (2) The plate umpire interferes with the catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play; runners may not advance.

Rule 5.06(c)(2) to 5.06(c)(6)

NOTE: The interference shall be disregarded if the catcher's throw retires the runner.

While the ball is dead no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to a balk, an overthrow, interference, or a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field).

Rule 5.06(c)(2) Comment: Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

- (3) A balk is committed; runners advance; (*See* Penalty 6.02(a).)
- (4) A ball is illegally batted; runners return;
- (5) A foul ball is not caught, in which case runners return to their bases. The umpire-in-chief shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;
- (6) A fair ball touches a runner or an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher; runners advance, if forced.

If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, no other infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball and the ball touches a runner immediately behind the infielder that the ball went through, or by, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. If a fair ball touches a runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out;

Rule 5.06(c)(6) Comment: If a fair ball touches an umpire working in the infield after it has bounded past, or over, the pitcher, it is a dead ball. If a batted ball is deflected by a fielder in fair territory and hits a runner or an umpire while still in flight and then caught by an infielder it shall not be a catch, but the ball shall remain in play.

Rule 5.06(c)(7) to 5.07(a)

- (7) A pitched ball lodges in the catcher's mask or paraphernalia, or in or against the umpire's body, mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, runners advance one base;

Rule 5.06(c)(7) Comment: If a foul tip hits the umpire and is caught by a fielder on the rebound, the ball is "dead" and the batsman cannot be called out. The same shall apply where such foul tip lodges in the umpire's mask or other paraphernalia.

If a third strike (not a foul tip) passes the catcher and hits an umpire, the ball is in play. If such ball rebounds and is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground, the batsman is not out on such a catch, but the ball remains in play and the batsman may be retired at first base, or touched with the ball for the out.

If a pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, on the third strike or fourth ball, then the batter is entitled to first base and all runners advance one base. If the count on the batter is less than three balls, runners advance one base.

If a ball is intentionally placed inside a player's uniform (e.g., a pants pocket) for the purpose of deceiving a base runner, the umpire shall call "Time." The umpire will place all runners at least one base (or more if warranted, in the umpire's judgment, in order to nullify the action of the ball being put out of play), from the base they originally occupied.

- (8) Any legal pitch touches a runner trying to score; runners advance.

5.07 Pitching

(a) Legal Pitching Delivery

There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time.

Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher while in contact with the pitcher's plate.

Rule 5.07(a) Comment: Pitchers may disengage the rubber after taking their signs but may not step quickly onto the rubber and pitch. This may be judged a quick pitch by the umpire. When

Rule 5.07(a) to 5.07(a)(1)

the pitcher disengages the rubber, he must drop his hands to his sides.

Pitchers will not be allowed to disengage the rubber after taking each sign.

The pitcher may not take a second step toward home plate with either foot or otherwise reset his pivot foot in his delivery of the pitch. If there is a runner, or runners, on base it is a balk under Rule 6.02(a); if the bases are unoccupied it should be treated as an illegal pitch under Rule 6.02(b).

(1) The Windup Position

The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without interruption or alteration. He shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in his actual delivery of the ball to the batter, he may take one step backward, and one step forward with his free foot.

When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of his body, with his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and his other foot free, he will be considered in the Windup Position.

Rule 5.07(a)(1) Comment: In the Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his "free" foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber.

From the Windup Position, the pitcher may:

- (A) deliver the ball to the batter, or
- (B) step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or
- (C) disengage the rubber (if he does he must drop his hand to his sides).

In disengaging the rubber the pitcher must step off with his pivot foot and not his free foot first. He may not go into a set or stretch position—if he does it is a balk.

Rule 5.07(a)(2)

(2) The Set Position

Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when he stands facing the batter with his pivot foot in contact with, and his other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of his body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position he may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot. Before assuming Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the stretch." But if he so elects, he shall come to Set Position before delivering the ball to the batter. After assuming Set Position, any natural motion associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without alteration or interruption.

Preparatory to coming to a set position, the pitcher shall have one hand on his side; from this position he shall go to his set position as defined in Rule 5.07(a)(2) without interruption and in one continuous motion.

The pitcher, following his stretch, must (a) hold the ball in both hands in front of his body and (b) come to a complete stop. This must be enforced. Umpires should watch this closely. Pitchers are constantly attempting to "beat the rule" in their efforts to hold runners on bases and in cases where the pitcher fails to make a complete "stop" called for in the rules, the umpire should immediately call a "Balk."

Rule 5.07(a)(2) Comment: With no runners on base, the pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the Set Position. If, however, in the umpire's judgment, a pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard, this delivery shall be deemed a quick pitch, for which the penalty is a ball. *See* Rule 6.02(a)(5) Comment.

With a runner or runners on base, a pitcher will be presumed to be pitching from the Set Position if he stands with his pivot foot in contact with and parallel to the pitcher's plate, and his other foot in front of the pitcher's plate, unless he notifies the umpire that he will be pitching from the Windup Position under such

Rule 5.07(a)(2) to 5.07(d)

circumstances prior to the beginning of an at-bat. A pitcher will be permitted to notify the umpire that he is pitching from the Windup Position within an at-bat only in the event of (i) a substitution by the offensive team; or (ii) immediately upon the advancement of one or more runners (i.e., after one or more base runners advance but before the delivery of the next pitch).

(b) Warm-Up Pitches

When a pitcher takes his position at the beginning of each inning, or when he relieves another pitcher, he shall be permitted to pitch preparatory pitches to his catcher during which play shall be suspended. A league by its own action may limit the number of preparatory pitches and/or may limit the amount of time such preparatory pitches may consume. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the umpire-in-chief shall allow him as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

(c) Pitcher Delays

When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 12 seconds after he receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call "Ball."

The 12-second timing starts when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter is in the box, alert to the pitcher. The timing stops when the pitcher releases the ball.

The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take his position on the rubber promptly. Obvious delay by the pitcher should instantly be penalized by the umpire.

(d) Throwing to the Bases

At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until his natural pitching motion commits him to the pitch, he may throw to any base provided he steps directly toward such base before making the throw.

Rule 5.07(d) to 5.08(a)

Rule 5.07(d) Comment: The pitcher shall step “ahead of the throw.” A snap throw followed by the step directly toward the base is a balk.

(e) Effect of Removing Pivot Foot From Plate

If the pitcher removes his pivot foot from contact with the pitcher’s plate by stepping backward with that foot, he thereby becomes an infielder and if he makes a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

Rule 5.07(e) Comment: The pitcher, while off the rubber, may throw to any base. If he makes a wild throw, such throw is the throw of an infielder and what follows is governed by the rules covering a ball thrown by a fielder.

(f) Ambidextrous Pitchers

A pitcher must indicate visually to the umpire-in-chief, the batter and any runners the hand with which he intends to pitch, which may be done by wearing his glove on the other hand while touching the pitcher’s plate. The pitcher is not permitted to pitch with the other hand until the batter is retired, the batter becomes a runner, the inning ends, the batter is substituted for by a pinch-hitter or the pitcher incurs an injury. In the event a pitcher switches pitching hands during an at-bat because he has suffered an injury, the pitcher may not, for the remainder of the game, pitch with the hand from which he has switched. The pitcher shall not be given the opportunity to throw any preparatory pitches after switching pitching hands. Any change of pitching hands must be indicated clearly to the umpire-in-chief.

5.08 How a Team Scores

- (a) One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third and home base before three men are put out to end the inning.

EXCEPTION: A run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a play in which the third out is made (1) by the batter-runner before he touches first base; (2) by any runner being forced out; or (3) by a preceding runner who is declared out because he failed to touch one of the bases.

Rule 5.08(a) to 5.08(b)

Rule 5.08(a) Comment: A run legally scored cannot be nullified by subsequent action of the runner, such as but not limited to an effort to return to third base in the belief that he had left the base before a caught fly ball.

- (b) When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the batter and all other runners to advance without liability of being put out, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first base.

Rule 5.08(b) Comment: An exception will be if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter from touching first base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the base because of the obstruction by the fans.

PENALTY: If the runner on third refuses to advance to and touch home base in a reasonable time, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player and order the game resumed. If, with two out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first base, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player, and order the game resumed. If, before two are out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first base, the run shall count, but the offending player shall be called out.

Rule 5.08 Comment:

APPROVED RULING: No run shall score during a play in which the third out is made by the batter-runner before he touches first base. Example: One out, Jones on second, Smith on first. The batter, Brown, hits safely. Jones scores. Smith is out on the throw to the plate. Two outs. But Brown missed first base. The ball is thrown to first, an appeal is made, and Brown is out. Three outs. Since Jones crossed the plate during a play in which

Rule 5.08(b)

the third out was made by the batter-runner before he touched first base, Jones' run does not count.

APPROVED RULING: Following runners are not affected by an act of a preceding runner unless two are out.

EXAMPLE: One out, Jones on second, Smith on first, and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. Jones fails to touch third on his way to the plate. Smith and Brown score. The defense holds the ball on third, appeals to umpire, and Jones is out. Smith's and Brown's runs count.

APPROVED RULING: Two out, Jones on second, Smith on first and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. All three runs cross the plate. But Jones missed third base, and on appeal is declared out. Three outs. Smith's and Brown's runs are voided. No score on the play.

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on second. Batter Brown flies out to center. Two out. Jones scores after catch and Smith scores on bad throw to plate. But Jones, on appeal, is adjudged to have left third before the catch and is out. Three outs. No runs.

APPROVED RULING: Two out, bases full, batter hits home run over fence. Batter, on appeal, is declared out for missing first base. Three outs. No run counts.

Here is a general statement that covers:

When a runner misses a base and a fielder holds the ball on a missed base, or on the base originally occupied by the runner if a fly ball is caught, and appeals for the umpire's decision, the runner is out when the umpire sustains the appeal; all runners may score if possible, except that with two out the runner is out at the moment he misses the bag, if an appeal is sustained as applied to the following runners.

Rule 5.08(b) to 5.09(a)(1)

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on first, and Brown flies out to right field. Two outs. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first but the right fielder's throw beat him to the base. Three outs. But Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first base, hence Jones' run counts. It was not a force play.

5.09 Making an Out

(a) Retiring the Batter

A batter is out when:

- (1) His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

Rule 5.09(a)(1) Comment: A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other out-of-play area (such as the stands), must have one or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the lip of the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other out-of-play area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, steps or falls into a dugout or other out-of-play area, in which case the ball is dead. Status of runners shall be as described in Rule 5.06(b)(3)(C) Comment.

A catch is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in his hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it; providing he does not use his cap, protector, pocket or any other part of his uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a player, or with a wall, or if he falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball and that his release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If the fielder has made the

Rule 5.09(a)(1) to 5.09(a)(7)

catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught.

Catch Comment: A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, or held by another fielder before it touches the ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball. A fielder may reach over a fence, railing, rope or other line of demarcation to make a catch. He may jump on top of a railing, or canvas that may be in foul ground. No interference should be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk.

If a fielder, attempting a catch at the edge of the dugout, is “held up” and kept from an apparent fall by a player or players of either team and the catch is made, it shall be allowed.

(2) A third strike is legally caught by the catcher;

Rule 5.09(a)(2) Comment: “Legally caught” means in the catcher’s glove before the ball touches the ground. It is not legal if the ball lodges in his clothing or paraphernalia; or if it touches the umpire and is caught by the catcher on the rebound.

If a foul tip first strikes any part of the catcher’s body or paraphernalia and is caught by hand or glove against his body or protector, before the ball touches the ground, it is a strike, and if third strike, batter is out.

- (3) A third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out;
- (4) He bunts foul on third strike;
- (5) An Infield Fly is declared;
- (6) He attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him;
- (7) His fair ball touches him before touching a fielder. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter’s box, *see* Rule 5.04(b)(5), and, in the umpire’s judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, a batted ball that strikes the batter or his bat shall be ruled a foul ball;

Rule 5.09(a)(8) to 5.09(a)(10)

- (8) After hitting or bunting a fair ball, his bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter's box, *see* Rule 5.04(b)(5), and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, a batted ball that strikes the batter or his bat shall be ruled a foul ball;

Rule 5.09(a)(8) Comment: If a bat breaks and part of it is in fair territory and is hit by a batted ball or part of it hits a runner or fielder, play shall continue and no interference called. If a batted ball hits part of a broken bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball.

If a whole bat is thrown into fair or foul territory and interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called, whether intentional or not.

In cases where the batting helmet is accidentally hit with a batted ball on or over fair territory or a thrown ball, the ball remains in play the same as if it has not hit the helmet.

If a batted ball strikes a batting helmet or any other object foreign to the natural ground while on foul territory, it is a foul ball and the ball is dead.

If, in the umpire's judgment, there is intent on the part of a base runner to interfere with a batted or thrown ball by dropping the helmet or throwing it at the ball, then the runner would be out, the ball dead and runners would return to last base legally touched.

- (9) After hitting or bunting a ball that continues to move over foul territory, he intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;
- (10) After a third strike or after he hits a fair ball, he or first

Rule 5.09(a)(10) to 5.09(a)(13)

base is tagged before he touches first base;

- (11) In running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, he runs outside (to the right of) the three-foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base, in which case the ball is dead; except that he may run outside (to the right of) the three-foot line or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

Rule 5.09(a)(11) Comment: The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the three-foot lane or on the lines marking the lane. The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base for the sole purpose of touching first base.

- (12) An infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first, first and second, first and third, or first, second and third base occupied before two are out. The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;

APPROVED RULING: In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the Infield Fly rule applies.

- (13) A preceding runner shall, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interfere with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete any play;

Rule 5.09(a)(13) Comment: The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted, unsportsmanlike action by the runner in leaving the baseline for the obvious purpose of crashing the pivot man on a double play, rather than trying to reach the base. Obviously this is an umpire's judgment play. (See Rule 6.01(j).)

Rule 5.09(a)(14) to 5.09(b)(2)

- (14) With two out, a runner on third base, and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "Strike Three," the batter is out and the run shall not count; before two are out, the umpire shall call "Strike Three," the ball is dead, and the run counts;
- (15) A member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to catch or field a batted ball. *See* Rule 6.01(b). For interference by a runner, *see* Rule 5.09(b)(3).

(b) Retiring a Runner

Any runner is out when:

- (1) He runs more than three feet away from his base path to avoid being tagged unless his action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's base path is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base he is attempting to reach safely; or
- (2) After touching first base, he leaves the base path, obviously abandoning his effort to touch the next base;

Rule 5.09(b)(1) and (2) Comment: Any runner after reaching first base who leaves the base path heading for his dugout or his position believing that there is no further play, may be declared out if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning his efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner.

This rule also covers the following and similar plays: Less than two out, score tied last of ninth inning, runner on first, batter hits a ball out of park for winning run, the runner on first passes second and thinking the home run automatically wins the game, cuts across diamond toward his bench as batter-runner circles bases. In this case, the base runner would be called out "for abandoning his effort to touch the next base" and batter-runner permitted to continue around bases to make his home run

Rule 5.09(b)(2) to 5.09(b)(5)

valid. If there are two out, home run would not count. *See* Rule 5.09(d). This is not an appeal play.

PLAY—Runner believing he is called out on a tag at first or third base starts for the dugout and progresses a reasonable distance still indicating by his actions that he is out, shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

- (3) He intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball (*see* Rule 6.01(j));

PENALTY: For penalties applying to a runner's intentional interference with a thrown ball or his hindrance of a fielder's attempt to make a play on a batted ball, *see* Rule 6.01(a) Penalty for Interference Comment.

- (4) He is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off his base.

EXCEPTION: A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or oversliding first base if he returns immediately to the base;

APPROVED RULING: (A) If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if he had reached the base safely.

APPROVED RULING: (B) If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, he touches or occupies the point marked by the dislodged bag.

- (5) He fails to retouch his base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught before he, or his base, is tagged by a fielder. He shall not be called out for failure to retouch his base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play;

Rule 5.09(b)(5) Comment: Runners need not "tag up" on a foul tip. They may steal on a foul tip. If a so-called tip is not caught, it becomes an ordinary foul. Runners then return to their bases.

Rule 5.09(b)(6) to 5.09(b)(7)

- (6) He or the next base is tagged before he touches the next base, after he has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which he is forced to advance, and if he overslides or overruns the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base he had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and he can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which he is forced;

Rule 5.09(b)(6) Comment:

PLAY—Runner on first and three balls on batter: Runner steals on the next pitch, which is fourth ball, but after having touched second he overslides or overruns that base. Catcher's throw catches him before he can return. Ruling is that runner is out. (Force out is removed.)

Oversliding and overrunning situations arise at bases other than first base. For instance, before two are out, and runners on first and second, or first, second and third, the ball is hit to an infielder who tries for the double play. The runner on first beats the throw to second base but overslides the base. The relay is made to first base and the batter-runner is out. The first baseman, seeing the runner at second base off the bag, makes the return throw to second and the runner is tagged off the base. Meanwhile runners have crossed the plate. The question is: Is this a force play? Was the force removed when the batter-runner was out at first base? Do the runs that crossed the plate during this play and before the third out was made when the runner was tagged at second, count? Answer: The runs score. It is not a force play. It is a tag play.

- (7) He is touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has gone through, or by, an infielder and no other infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball. The ball

Rule 5.09(b)(7) to 5.09(b)(9)

is dead and no runner may score, nor runners advance, except runners forced to advance. EXCEPTION: If a runner is touching his base when touched by an Infield Fly, he is not out, although the batter is out;

Rule 5.09(b)(7) Comment: If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead.

If a runner is touched by an Infield Fly when he is not touching his base, and before the ball has gone through, or by, an infielder, and no other infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball, both the runner and batter are out. Regardless of whether a runner is touching his base or not when touched by an Infield Fly before the ball has gone through, or by, an infielder and no other infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball, the ball is dead and no runner may score, nor runners advance, except runners forced to advance.

- (8) He attempts to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;
- (9) He passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;

Rule 5.09(b)(9) Comment: A runner may be deemed to have passed a preceding (i.e., lead) runner based on his actions *or* the actions of a preceding runner.

PLAY—Runners on second base and third base with one out. The runner from third base (i.e., the lead runner) makes an advance toward home and is caught in a rundown between third base and home plate. Believing the lead runner will be tagged out, the runner at second base (i.e., the trailing runner) advances to third base. Before being tagged, the lead runner runs back to and beyond third base toward left field. At this time, the trailing runner has passed the lead runner as a result of the lead runner's actions. As a result, the trailing runner is out and third base is unoccupied. The lead runner is entitled to third base if he returns to touch it before he

Rule 5.09(b)(9) to 5.09(b)(13)

is out, *see* Rule 5.06(a)(1), unless he is declared out for abandoning the bases.

- (10) After he has acquired legal possession of a base, he runs the bases in reverse order for the purpose of confusing the defense or making a travesty of the game. The umpire shall immediately call “Time” and declare the runner out;

Rule 5.09(b)(10) Comment: If a runner touches an unoccupied base and then thinks the ball was caught or is decoyed into returning to the base he last touched, he may be put out running back to that base, but if he reaches the previously occupied base safely he cannot be put out while in contact with that base.

- (11) He fails to return at once to first base after overrunning or oversliding that base. If he attempts to run to second he is out when tagged. If, after overrunning or oversliding first base he starts toward the dugout, or toward his position, and fails to return to first base at once, he is out, on appeal, when he or the base is tagged;

Rule 5.09(b)(11) Comment: Runner who touches first base in overrunning and is declared safe by the umpire has, within the intent of Rule 5.08(a) “reached first base” and any run which scores on such a play counts, even though the runner subsequently becomes the third out for failure to return “at once,” as covered in Rule 5.09(b)(11).

- (12) 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;

Rule 5.09(b)(12) Comment: This rule applies only where runner is on his way to the bench and the catcher would be required to chase him. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, runner must be tagged.

- (13) A play on him is being made and a member of his team

Rule 5.09(b)(13) to 5.09(c)(3)

(other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to field a thrown ball. *See* Rule 5.09(b)(3). For interference by a runner, *see* Rule 5.09(b)(3).

(c) Appeal Plays

Any runner shall be called out, on appeal, when:

- (1) After a fly ball is caught, he fails to retouch his original base before he or his original base is tagged;

Rule 5.09(c)(1) Comment: "Retouch," in this rule, means to tag up and start from a contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of his base. Such runner shall be called out on appeal.

- (2) With the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, he fails to touch each base in order before he, or a missed base, is tagged;

APPROVED RULING: (A) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. (B) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one he has left after he has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.

Rule 5.09(c)(2) Comment:

PLAY—(A) Batter hits ball out of park or ground rule double and misses first base (ball is dead)—he may return to first base to correct his mistake before he touches second but if he touches second he may not return to first and if defensive team appeals he is declared out at first.

PLAY—(B) Batter hits ball to shortstop who throws wild into stand (ball is dead)—batter-runner misses first base but is awarded second base on the overthrow. Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first base before he proceeds to second base.

These are appeal plays.

- (3) He overruns or overslides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and he or the base is tagged prior to the runner returning to first base;

Rule 5.09(c)(4) to 5.09(c)

- (4) He 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 a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field.

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 first 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 first 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 purpose of this rule, the defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the bench or Clubhouse.

Rule 5.09(c) Comment: If two runners arrive at home base about the same time and the first runner misses home plate but a second runner legally touches the plate, the runner is tagged out on his attempt to come back and touch the base or is called out, on appeal, then he shall be considered as having been put out before the second runner scored and being the third out. Second runner’s run shall not count, as provided in Rule 5.09(d).

If a pitcher balks when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in his hand, would not constitute

Rule 5.09(c) to 5.10(b)

an appeal. Time is not out when an appeal is being made.

(d) Effect of Preceding Runner's Failure to Touch a Base

Unless two are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third out, no runners following him shall score. If such third out is the result of a force play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.

(e) Retiring the Side

When three offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team.

5.10 Substitutions and Pitching Changes (Including Visits to the Mound)

- (a) A player, or players, may be substituted during a game at any time the ball is dead. A substitute player shall bat in the replaced player's position in the team's batting order.
- (b) The manager shall immediately notify the umpire-in-chief of any substitution and shall state to the umpire-in-chief the substitute's place in the batting order.

Rule 5.10(b) Comment: To avoid any confusion, the manager should give the name of the substitute, his position in the batting order and his position on the field. When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the umpire-in-chief such players' positions in the team's batting order, and the umpire-in-chief shall so notify the Official Scorer. If this information is not immediately given to the umpire-in-chief, the umpire-in-chief shall have authority to designate the substitutes' places in the batting order.

If a double-switch is being made, the manager or coach shall first notify the plate umpire. The umpire-in-chief must be informed of the multiple substitutions and interchanged batting order before the manager calls for a new pitcher (regardless of whether the manager or coach announces the double-switch

Rule 5.10(b) to 5.10(d)

before crossing the foul line). Signaling or motioning to the bullpen is to be considered an official substitution for the new pitcher. It is not permissible for the manager to go to the mound, call for a new pitcher, and then inform the umpire of multiple substitutions with the intention of interchanging the batting order.

Players for whom substitutions have been made may remain with their team on the bench or may “warm-up” pitchers. If a manager substitutes another player for himself, he may continue to direct his team from the bench or the coach’s box. Umpires should not permit players for whom substitutes have been made, and who are permitted to remain on the bench, to address any remarks to any opposing player or manager, or to the umpires.

- (c) The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.
- (d) A player once removed from a game shall not re-enter that game. If a player who has been substituted for attempts to re-enter, or re-enters, the game in any capacity, the umpire-in-chief shall direct the player’s manager to remove such player from the game immediately upon noticing the player’s presence or upon being informed of the player’s improper presence by another umpire or by either manager. If such direction to remove the substituted for player occurs before play commences with the player improperly in the game, then the substitute player may enter the game. If such direction to remove the substituted-for player occurs after play has commenced with the substituted-for player in the game, then the substitute player shall be deemed to have been removed from the game (in addition to the removal of the substituted-for player) and shall not enter the game. If a substitute enters the game in place of a player-manager, the manager may thereafter go to the coaching lines at his discretion. When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the umpire-in-chief such players’ positions in the team’s batting order and the umpire-in-chief shall so notify the

Rule 5.10(d) to 5.10(g)

Official Scorer. If this information is not immediately given to the umpire-in-chief, he shall have authority to designate the substitutes' places in the batting order.

Rule 5.10(d) Comment: A pitcher may change to another position only once during the same inning; e.g. the pitcher will not be allowed to assume a position other than a pitcher more than once in the same inning.

Any player other than a pitcher substituted for an injured player shall be allowed five warm-up throws. (See Rule 5.07(b) for pitchers.)

Any play that occurs while a player appears in a game after having been substituted for shall count. If, in an umpire's judgment, the player re-entered the game knowing that he had been removed, the umpire may eject the manager.

- (e) A player whose name is on his team's batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of his team.

Rule 5.10(e) Comment: This rule is intended to eliminate the practice of using so-called courtesy runners. No player in the game shall be permitted to act as a courtesy runner for a teammate. No player who has been in the game and has been taken out for a substitute shall return as a courtesy runner. Any player not in the lineup, if used as a runner, shall be considered as a substitute player.

- (f) The pitcher named in the batting order handed the umpire-in-chief, as provided in Rules 4.02(a) and 4.02(b), shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching.
- (g) The starting pitcher or any substitute pitcher is required to pitch to a minimum of three consecutive batters, including the batter then at bat (or any substitute batter), until such batters are put out or reach first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the starting pitcher or substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the umpire-in-chief's judgment, incapacitates him from further play as a pitcher.

Rule 5.10(g) to 5.10(i)

Rule 5.10(g) Comment: To qualify as one of three consecutive batters, the batter must complete his plate appearance, which ends only when the batter is put out or becomes a runner. If the offensive team is put out prior to any substitute pitcher completing his first three consecutive batters, the pitcher may be removed from the game between innings; but, if he returns for the subsequent inning, he must complete pitching to as many batters as necessary to satisfy the three consecutive batters requirement, which total would include any batters that completed a plate appearance with that pitcher the prior inning (i.e., if he completed 0 PA in inning 1, he must complete 3 PA in inning 2; if he completed 1 PA in inning 1, he must complete 2 PA in inning 2; if he completed 2 PA in inning 1, he must complete 1 PA in inning 2). An intentional walk counts toward fulfilling the number of required batters. Picking off a runner does not fulfill the minimum batter requirement, but would permit the early removal of the pitcher if the out recorded by the pickoff ends the inning.

- (h) If an improper substitution is made for the pitcher, the umpire shall direct the proper pitcher to return to the game until the provisions of this rule are fulfilled. If the improper pitcher is permitted to pitch, any play that results is legal. The improper pitcher becomes the proper pitcher as soon as he makes his first pitch to the batter, or as soon as any runner is put out.

Rule 5.10(h) Comment: If a manager attempts to remove a pitcher in violation of Rule 5.10(h) the umpire shall notify the manager of the offending Club that it cannot be done. If, by chance, the umpire-in-chief has, through oversight, announced the incoming improper pitcher, he should still correct the situation before the improper pitcher pitches. Once the improper pitcher delivers a pitch he becomes the proper pitcher.

- (i) If a pitcher who is already in the game crosses the foul line on his way to take his place on the pitcher's plate to start an inning, he shall pitch to the first batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the batter is substituted for, or the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. If the pitcher

Rule 5.10(i) to 5.10(k)

ends the previous inning on base or at bat and does not return to the dugout after the inning is completed, the pitcher is not required to pitch to the first batter of the inning until he makes contact with the pitcher's plate to begin his warm-up pitches.

NOTE: The substitute batter exception to the requirement that a pitcher already in the game must face the first batter to start an inning contained in Rule 5.10(i) does not apply to a substitute pitcher who returns for a subsequent inning without having satisfied the three batter requirement contained in Rule 5.10(g). Thus, if a pitcher who has not completed his three batter requirement at the end of an inning returns for the subsequent inning, the obligation to satisfy the balance of this requirement shall continue even if the opposing team elects to pinch hit for the first hitter to start a subsequent inning.

- (j) If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered as having entered the game when:
- (1) If a pitcher, he takes his place on the pitcher's plate;
 - (2) If a batter, he takes his place in the batter's box;
 - (3) If a fielder, he reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder he has replaced, and play commences;
 - (4) If a runner, he takes the place of the runner he has replaced.

Any play made by, or on, any of the above mentioned unannounced substitutes shall be legal.

- (k) Players and substitutes of both teams shall confine themselves to their team's benches unless actually participating in the play or preparing to enter the game, or coaching at first or third base. No one except players, substitutes, managers, coaches, trainers and bat boys shall occupy a bench during a game.

PENALTY: For violation the umpire may, after warning, remove the offender from the field.

Rule 5.10(k) Comment: Players on the injured list are permitted to participate in pre-game activity and sit on the bench during a game but may not take part in any activity during the game such

Rule 5.10(k) to Rule 5.10(l)

as warming up a pitcher, bench-jockeying, etc. Injured players are not allowed to enter the playing surface at any time or for any purpose during the game.

(l) Visits to the Mound Requiring a Pitcher's Removal From the Game

A professional league shall adopt the following rule pertaining to the visit of the manager or coach to the pitcher:

- (1) This rule limits the number of trips a manager or coach may make to any one pitcher in any one inning;
- (2) A second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the game;
- (3) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a second visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but
- (4) if a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or coach may make a second visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher from the game.

A manager or coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

Rule 5.10(l) Comment: If the manager or coach goes to the catcher or infielder and that player then goes to the mound or the pitcher comes to him at his position before there is an intervening play (a pitch or other play) that will be the same as the manager or coach going to the mound.

Any attempt to evade or circumvent this rule by the manager or coach going to the catcher or an infielder and then that player going to the mound to confer with the pitcher shall constitute a trip to the mound.

If the coach goes to the mound and removes a pitcher and then the manager goes to the mound to talk with the new pitcher, that will constitute one trip to that new pitcher that inning.

A manager or coach shall not be considered to have concluded his visit to the mound if he temporarily leaves the 18-foot circle

Rule 5.10(l) to 5.10(m)(2)

surrounding the pitcher's rubber for purposes of notifying the umpire that a double-switch or substitution is being made.

In a case where a manager has made his first trip to the mound and then returns the second time to the mound in the same inning with the same pitcher in the game and the same batter at bat, after being warned by the umpire that he cannot return to the mound, the manager shall be removed from the game and the pitcher required to pitch to the batter until he is retired or gets on base. After the batter is retired, or becomes a base runner, then this pitcher must be removed from the game. The manager should be notified that his pitcher will be removed from the game after he pitches to one hitter, so he can have a substitute pitcher warmed up. In such circumstance, the substitute pitcher will be allowed as much time to throw preparatory pitches as in the umpire's judgment circumstances justify.

For purposes of this Rule 5.10(l), replacing the pitcher shall constitute one trip to that pitcher that inning, regardless of whether the manager or coach chooses to go to the mound, or whether the pitcher remains in the game at a different position on defense.

(m) Limitation on the Number of Mound Visits Per Game

The following rule shall apply in Major League games. The Minor Leagues may adopt a rule providing for a different limitation on the number of mound visits permitted in a game or no limitation on the number of mound visits.

- (1) Mound visits without a pitching change shall be limited to five per team, per nine innings. For any extra-innings played, each team shall be entitled to one additional non-pitching change mound visit per inning.
- (2) For purposes of this Rule 5.10(m), a manager or coach trip to the mound to meet with the pitcher shall constitute a visit. A player leaving his position to confer with the pitcher, including a pitcher leaving the mound to confer with another player, shall also constitute a visit, regardless of where the visit occurs or the length of the visit. Visits by a manager, coach or player to join a mound visit

Rule 5.10(m)(2) to 5.10(m)(3)

already in progress shall not constitute an independent visit. In addition, the following shall not constitute visits:

- (A) Discussions between pitchers and position player(s) that occur between batters in the normal course of play and do not require either the position player(s) or the pitcher to relocate;
 - (B) Visits by position players to the mound solely to clean spikes, provided the player does not confer with the pitcher;
 - (C) Visits to the mound due to an injury or potential injury of the pitcher;
 - (D) Visits by position players to the mound after the announcement of an offensive substitution but prior to a subsequent pitch or play;
 - (E) Visits to the mound by position players that occur during a suspension of play pursuant to an umpire's call of "Time" (e.g., following an injury to an umpire or player; the presence of a spectator, object, or a member of the grounds crew on the field; a manager's initiation of Replay Review, etc.), provided that the mound visit does not otherwise delay a return to game action;
 - (F) Visits to the mound by position players after a home run, provided that the player returns to his position before the runner crosses home plate; and
 - (G) Visits to the mound by position players during an inning break or pitching change, provided that the mound visit does not prevent the pitcher from complying with any applicable inning break or pitching change time limits.
- (3) Cross Up in Signs. In the event a team has exhausted its allotment of mound visits in a game (or extra inning) and the home plate umpire determines that the catcher and pitcher did not have a shared understanding of the location or type of pitch that had been signaled by the

Rule 5.10(m)(3) to 5.11

catcher (otherwise referred to as a “cross up”), the home plate umpire may, upon request of the catcher, allow the catcher to make a brief mound visit. However, any mound visit resulting from a “cross up” prior to a team exhausting its allotted number of visits shall count against a team’s total number of allotted mound visits.

- (4) **Enforcement of Mound Visit Limits.** A manager or coach who crosses the foul line on his way to the mound after his team has exhausted its mound visits must make a pitching change, unless the pitcher has not pitched to a minimum of three consecutive batters in accordance with Rule 5.10(g), in which case the pitcher shall continue to pitch only to complete pitching to his first three consecutive batters (or the end of the inning, whichever comes first) in accordance with Rule 5.10(g). If a manager or coach believes an exception to the mound visit rule applies, he must confer with the umpire prior to crossing the foul line. In circumstances in which a team is forced to make an unintended pitching change by operation of this Rule, and there is no relief pitcher warming up in the bullpen, the manager or coach who violated the Rule by exceeding his team’s allotted number of mound visits shall be subject to ejection from the game. The umpire may allow the substitute pitcher additional time to prepare to enter the game.

If a position player makes a visit after his team has exhausted its allotted number of mound visits he may be subject to ejection for failing to return to his position when instructed by the umpire; however, an impermissible visit by a position player shall not require the removal of the pitcher.

5.11 Designated Hitter Rule

Any League may elect to use Rule 5.11(a), which shall be called the Designated Hitter Rule.

Rule 5.11(a)(1) to 5.11(a)(5)

(a) The Designated Hitter Rule provides as follows:

- (1) A hitter may be designated to bat for the starting pitcher and all subsequent pitchers in any game without otherwise affecting the status of the pitcher(s) in the game. A Designated Hitter for the pitcher, if any, must be selected prior to the game and must be included in the lineup cards presented to the umpire-in-chief. If a manager lists 10 players in his team's lineup card, but fails to indicate one as the Designated Hitter, and an umpire or either manager (or designee of either manager who presents his team's lineup card) notices the error before the umpire-in-chief calls "Play" to start the game, the umpire-in-chief shall direct the manager who had made the omission to designate which of the nine players, other than the pitcher, will be the Designated Hitter.

Rule 5.11(a)(1) Comment: A correction of a failure to indicate a Designated Hitter when 10 players are listed in a batting order is an "obvious" error that may be corrected before a game starts. See Rule 4.03 Comment.

- (2) The Designated Hitter named in the starting lineup must come to bat at least one time, unless the opposing Club changes pitchers.
- (3) It is not mandatory that a Club designate a hitter for the pitcher, but failure to do so prior to the game precludes the use of a Designated Hitter for that Club for that game.
- (4) Pinch-hitters for a Designated Hitter may be used. Any substitute hitter for a Designated Hitter becomes the Designated Hitter. A replaced Designated Hitter shall not re-enter the game in any capacity.
- (5) The Designated Hitter may be used on defense, continuing to bat in the same position in the batting order, but the pitcher must then bat in the place of the substituted defensive player, unless more than one substitution is made, and the manager then must designate their spots in the batting order.

Rule 5.11(a)(6) to 5.11(a)(11)

- (6) A runner may be substituted for the Designated Hitter and the runner assumes the role of Designated Hitter. A Designated Hitter may not pinch-run.
- (7) A Designated Hitter is “locked” into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting rotation of the Designated Hitter.
- (8) Once the game pitcher is switched from the mound to a position on defense, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that Club for the remainder of the game.
- (9) Once a pinch-hitter bats for any player in the batting order and then enters the game to pitch, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that Club for the remainder of the game.
- (10) Once the game pitcher bats or runs for the Designated Hitter, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that Club for the remainder of the game. The game pitcher may pinch-hit or pinch-run only for the Designated Hitter.
- (11) If a manager lists 10 players in his team’s lineup card, but fails to indicate one as the Designated Hitter, and the opposing manager brings the failure to list a Designated Hitter to the attention of the umpire-in-chief after the game starts, then
 - (A) the pitcher will be required to bat in the batting order in the place of the listed player who has not assumed a position on defense, if the team has taken the field on defense, or
 - (B) if the team has not yet taken the field on defense, the pitcher will be placed in the batting order in place of any player, as chosen by the manager of that team.

In either case, the player whom the pitcher replaces in the batting order shall be considered to have been substituted for and is removed from the game and the Designated Hitter role for that Club shall be terminated for the remainder of the game. Any play

Rule 5.11(a)(11) to 5.12(b)(1)

that occurred before the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief shall count, subject to Rule 6.03(b).

- (12) Once a Designated Hitter assumes a position on defense, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that Club for the remainder of the game.
 - (13) A substitute for the Designated Hitter need not be announced until it is the Designated Hitter's turn to bat.
 - (14) If a player on defense goes to the mound (i.e., replaces the pitcher), this move shall terminate the Designated Hitter's role for that Club for the remainder of the game.
 - (15) The Designated Hitter may not sit in the bullpen unless serving as a catcher in the bullpen.
- (b) In the event of inter-league competition between Clubs of leagues using the Designated Hitter Rule and Clubs of leagues not using the Designated Hitter Rule, the rule will be used as follows:
- (1) In World Series or exhibition games, the rule will be used or not used as is the practice of the league of the home team.
 - (2) In All-Star games, the rule will only be used if both teams and both Leagues so agree.

5.12 Calling "Time" and Dead Balls

- (a) When an umpire suspends play, he shall call "Time." At the umpire-in-chief's call of "Play," the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of "Time" and the call of "Play" the ball is dead.
- (b) The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire-in-chief shall call "Time:"
 - (1) When in his judgment weather, darkness or similar conditions make immediate further play impossible;

Rule 5.12(b)(2) to 5.12(b)(8)

- (2) When light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow the play;

NOTE: A league may adopt its own regulations governing games interrupted by light failure.

- (3) When an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire;
 - (A) If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent him from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run hit out of the playing field, or an award of one or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play.
- (4) When a manager requests “Time” for a substitution, or for a conference with one of his players.
- (5) When the umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause.
- (6) When a fielder, after catching a fly ball, steps or falls into any out-of-play area. All other runners shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder entered such out-of-play area.
- (7) When an umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field.
- (8) Except in the cases stated in paragraphs (2) and (3)(A) of this rule, no umpire shall call “Time” while a play is in progress.

After the ball is dead, play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes his place on the pitcher’s plate with a new ball or the same ball in his possession and the plate umpire calls “Play.” The plate umpire shall call “Play” as soon as the pitcher takes his place on his plate with the ball in his possession.

Rule 6.01(a) to 6.01(a)(5)

6.00–IMPROPER PLAY, ILLEGAL ACTION, AND MISCONDUCT

6.01 Interference, Obstruction, and Catcher Collisions

(a) Batter or Runner Interference

It is interference by a batter or a runner when:

- (1) After a third strike that is not caught by the catcher, the batter-runner clearly hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball. Such batter-runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. If a pitch that is not caught remains in the vicinity of home plate and it is inadvertently deflected by the batter or umpire, that ball is a dead ball and the runners should return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch (but if the pitch was strike three, the batter is out).

Rule 6.01(a)(1) Comment: If the pitched ball deflects off the catcher or umpire and subsequently touches the batter-runner, it is not considered interference unless, in the judgment of the umpire, the batter-runner clearly hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball.

- (2) He intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;
- (3) Before two are out and a runner on third base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;
- (4) Any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate or teammates;
- (5) Any batter or runner who has just been put out, or any runner who has just scored, hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate (*see* Rule 6.01(j));

Rule 6.01(a)(5) to 6.01(a)(10)

Rule 6.01(a)(5) Comment: If the batter or a runner continues to advance or returns or attempts to return to his last legally touched base after he has been put out, he shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.

- (6) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-runner because of the action of his teammate. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner (*see* Rule 6.01(j));
- (7) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead; the umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall call out the runner who had advanced closest to the home plate regardless where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference (*see* Rule 6.01(j));
- (8) In the judgment of the umpire, the base coach at third base, or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists him in returning to or leaving third base or first base;
- (9) With a runner on third base, the base coach leaves his box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;
- (10) He fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball, and the runner comes in contact with one or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in contact with a fielder other than the one the umpire determines to be entitled to field such