



2015 AAD/USSSA BASEBALL

PLAYING RULES
FOR OFFICIALS

Condensed USSSA (with AAD/USSSA Addendums) and MLB

This rule book is produced as a condensed reference guide for the officials and is NOT all inclusive. Officials should reference the national USSSA rule book posted on the national USSSA web sites – www.ussa.com and the MLB rule book posted on the MLB web site.

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OFFICIAL BASEBALL NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES

In the event of any conflict in language between any past, present or future printed version of these Official Baseball National Bylaws & Rules and the USSSABASEBALL.ORG online version, the USSSABASEBALL.ORG online version shall have priority.

FOREWORD

The USSSA Baseball National Committee has condensed the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules to give quicker access to any written language pertaining to rules specific to the United States Specialty Sports Association Baseball Program. Playing rules not specifically covered herein, shall be governed by The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the MLB.com web site. In the event of any conflict in rule between these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the MLB.com web site, these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall govern.

USSSA SPECIFIC RULES

RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY

7.01 Playing Field & Equipment –

7.01.A The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – No seeds are allowed on or near synthetic turf fields. Officials are to remove any of their trash when they leave the field.

7.01.B For details on field layout including recommended direction of play, fair and foul territory requirements, infield and outfield grades, pitcher’s mound height and slope, batter’s and catcher’s box dimensions, and base and home plate size and construction should be referred to the Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on MLB.com.

7.01.C Bats - The Official Bat shall be round in cross section of the barrel and taper, straight in length and measure not more than 36 inches long, including tape or other grip additions to the bat, shall have a knob at the end of its handle, and not more than 2-1/4 inches in diameter for small barrel bats and not more than 2 and 3/4 inches for big barrel bats at its largest part. Its weight shall not exceed 31-ounces, including tape or grip addition to the bat. The bat shall have a grip of tape or some other material to facilitate holding the bat during the batter’s swing (not mandatory on wooden bats). All key graphics, including USSSA and BPF markings, must be permanent and cannot be applied as decals or by any other method that would allow the key graphics to be easily removed or added to the bat.

7.01.C.A. Material. THE BAT may be made of hard wood of one piece, or laminated from sections of hard wood bonded together with adhesive in such a way that the grain directions of all the pieces are essentially parallel to the length of the bat. THE BAT may also be made of aluminum or other metals, fiberglass, graphite or composite materials.

7.01.C.B. Construction. The bat may be made in pieces from different materials but must have a closed barrel end, a taper, a handle and a taper. The bat may be modular with interchangeable parts, subject to additional safety and tampering requirements as set forth in the standard USSSA Bat Licensing Agreement. The knob portion must be welded or mechanically attached to the bat. Only USSSA approved bats, USSSA approved weighted bats or USSSA approved weights, may be used on the deck circle.

7.01.C.C. Big Barrel Bats (Diameter greater than 2 1/4” but not more than 2 3/4”)

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2012 14 U AND YOUNGER BIG BARREL BAT RULES. TO BE LEGAL IN 2012 FOR USSSA 14U AND BELOW, A BIG BARREL BAT (no more than 2 3/4 inches diameter and no more than 36 inches in length) MUST BE MANUFACTURED BY AN APPROVED USSSA BAT LICENSEE, AND

- i) HAVE THE NEW USSSA MARK ON ITS TAPER, OR

(USSSA marks and other graphics of the bat must be applied permanently and must be applied by the USSSA licensed manufacturer. No stickers or decals are allowed and no one may add graphics to a bat once manufactured. Use of a bat with graphics not applied by the manufacturer will be use of an altered bat and subject to suspension under the USSSA Altered Bat rules. In addition to being violation of the USSSA Altered Bat rules, any use, creation or application of a USSSA mark without written permission of USSSA is a violation of Federal Trademark law and may result in prosecution by USSSA. If you have any concern about the person selling or providing you a bat, do not accept the bat, because you will be held responsible for any bat you bring into or use in a USSSA facility)

ii) BE A QUALIFIED BBCOR BAT, OR

iii) BE A WOOD BAT.

"Qualified BBCOR Bat" means a Big Barrel bat that is made by a USSSA approved bat licensee, has a BBCOR mark permanently attached to the bat that is recognized by NHSF as a legal bat for NHSF sanctioned play and has no more than a minus 3 ounces difference from the length of the bat which bat must be at least 29 inches long. Please note that only Qualified BBCOR bats have any weight v. length (drop) limitation.

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2012, 15U and Above Division of Play (15U – 18U scholastic divisions). All bats for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U must conform to the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) bat limitations including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces. These bats must be made by an approved USSSA licensed manufacturer AND

i) Must be NHSF approved with the appropriate BBCOR certification mark, OR

ii) Be a Wood Bat.

The new USSSA mark can be found in the Baseball Tab of the USSSA Website.

7.01.C.D. Small Barrel Bats (Diameter no more than $2\frac{1}{4}$ ")

EFFECTIVE for the calendar years 2012 and 2013. Only those Small Barrel bats made by approved USSSA licensed manufacturers that are either:

1. Wood, OR

2. Made with the old USSSA mark, OR

3. Have the New USSSA Mark will be allowed in USSSA play.

This includes Tee Ball bats that are longer than 23 inches. 23 inch and shorter. Small Barrel Tee Ball bats from approved USSSA licensed manufacturers will continue to be allowed in 2012 and 2013 without the Old or New USSSA Mark.

The Old mark is simply the words "USSSA 1.15 BPF", all together in one spot on the bat.

The new USSSA mark can be found in the Baseball Tab of the USSSA Website.

EFFECTIVE for the calendar years 2014, only those Small Barrel bats made by approved USSSA licensed manufacturers that are either:

1. Wood, OR

2. Made with the New USSSA Mark will be allowed in USSSA play.

This includes all Tee Ball bats that are longer than 23 inches. 23 inch and shorter Small Barrel Tee Ball bats from approved USSSA licensed manufacturers will continue to be allowed in 2014 without the New USSSA Mark.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – For league play, the drop restrictions (weight to length) may differ from the national rules. Be sure to refer to the league specific rules.

7.01.C.E. Altered Bat Director Inspection and Suspension. A USSSA Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a USSSA sanctioned event or any other USSSA facility. The owner and/or user may either:

1. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two year (automatic life for second time offenders under EI and/or E) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or,

2. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered.

7.01.C.E.I. Altered Bat Determination by Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer.

If, after making the inspection of a potential altered bat, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat might be an altered bat, the suspected offending owner and/or user and may either:

1. Withhold the bat from further examination by the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer of the bat and accept an immediate two year (up to life for second time offenders under sections E and/or EI) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal;

or

2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman and/or Manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered. If the Manufacturer or the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman determines that the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee Chairman in consultation with the Director who inspected the bat at the USSSA facility may suspend a first time offender for up to five (5) years from USSSA play. For a second time offender under E and/or EI, any such suspension will be for life.

7.01.C.F. Ownership and Knowledge of Bat Being Altered. The responsibility for knowing whether a bat is altered is that of the users and the owner of the bat. If an individual uses an altered bat in USSSA sanctioned play or is the owner of an altered bat that is brought into a USSSA facility, the suspensions under this Rule 2, Section 1 will be imposed without regard to what the individual actually knew about the altered bat. An individual must know that his bat is not an altered bat, if he brings it into a USSSA facility or used it in a USSSA sanctioned activity. If not, the individual can be suspended from USSSA activities for using or owning an altered bat. The fact that the individual did not know that the bat was altered is not a factor in imposing the suspension. The only question is whether the bat is altered or whether the owner/user has refused to let the bat be examined to determine if it is altered. After the Director, Altered Bat Committee and Manufacturer examination of a bat to determine if it is altered have all been completed, or upon the decision of the owner/user to not allow further inspection of the bat under E or EI, above, the bat shall be returned to the owner. If no one claims to be the owner, USSSA shall retain the bat. Once the bat has been returned to the owner, no appeal can be made with respect to whether the bat is altered or not.

7.01.C.G. Investigation Cooperation. Any coach, manager, player or other person who fails to cooperate in the investigation by USSSA of a potential or actual altered bat shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension. A manager or coach of a team that has more than one of his team's bats determined to be altered (or not allowed to be inspected upon request for an altered bat inspection under E and/or EI, above) shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension.

7.01.C.L. Worn/Abused/Damaged/Foreign Substance Bats Not Allowed in USSSA Sanctioned Play.

1. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if it is damaged in any way. Damaged bats include those with damage to the knob or end cap, those which have loose knobs or end caps, and those with cracks or dents in the bat material. For example, if the end cap is in any way loose or appears damaged, the bat should be removed from play for being a damaged bat. If an end plug has come out or the knob has come off, the only way that such bat is legal in USSSA play, is if the knob or end cap is replaced by the manufacturer. Replacement by anyone else results in an altered bat with potential suspension for the owner/user of the bat.
2. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if any of the graphics of the bat have worn off. For example, even if the only graphics that have worn off are not Key Graphic Information and are only items such as the patent no., a manufacturer logo, or the approval mark of another association, the bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
3. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if the paint has been worn through and the actual bat material is showing. For example, if at the end of the barrel next to the taper where there are no graphics the bat paint is worn off and the underlying bat material is exposed, that bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
4. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if there is a foreign substance on the barrel or taper of a bat. Foreign substances included among other substances, pine tar, stick-em type products and even dirt or mud, but only if the substance adds to the thickness of the barrel or covers Key Graphic Information such as the USSSA 1.15 BPF mark, the serial number of the bat, the model or manufacturer name, official softball, etc.. Players are responsible for their equipment and must clean such substances off of their bats so that the substance does not add to the thickness of the bat or obscure any Key Graphics Information about the bat. For example, while bats will surely get dirt on them under normal use and may have pine tar added to the grip, if the dirt or pine tar obscures Key Graphic Information or adds to the thickness of the bat, such bats cannot be used in USSSA play until the dirt or pine tar has been removed to the extent necessary to make all such Key Graphic Information readable and the bat not have increased thickness. If Key Graphic Information about a bat cannot be read, the bat should not be used in USSSA play.
5. If any removed bat under these section L rules is brought back into play at any USSSA sanctioned event at any time, the owner and user of such bat may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. And if the foreign substance or the wear/abuse/damage is apparent enough that the batter should have been aware of it, the batter may be so suspended for bringing such a bat into the batter's box without having been warned in advance. Players are responsible for their equipment and must not use equipment that is even potentially illegal for use in USSSA sanctioned play.

6. In addition to the player being suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct, coaches of youth teams may also be so suspended when their players attempt to bat with such bats. Also, coaches of adult teams which have multiple offenses under this rule may also be so suspended for failing to have his team follow USSSA equipment rules. Please be reminded that unsportsmanlike conduct can result in a game or tournament suspension in the discretion of the umpire or tournament director and up to a year suspension in the discretion of the state director.

7.01.C.M. Youth Player Altered Bats. The parents or legal guardians of a youth player suspended under section E and/or EI shall be suspended for life from all USSSA sanctioned activities. As such, the player even after his suspension has ended under E and/or EI. cannot participate in USSSA sanctioned activities until the player is 18 years old.

In addition to any other penalties under this rule 2.1, any coach or manager of a youth team that has more than one suspension imposed on his players in connection with sections E and/or EI. will be suspended from all USSSA activities for life.

7.01.C.N. Altered Bat. An "Altered Bat" is a bat that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

1. The bat has had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by addition of graphics, painting, repainting, removal of bat material or paint by any means including but not limited to sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means.
2. The bat has had the plug or the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way.
3. The bat has had anything removed or added or inserted to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob. Other examples of altering a bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers' markings or replacing the handle of a bat with a new handle.. Replacing the grip, adding tape or adding a build up to the handle is not considered altering a bat.
4. The bat has been subjected to pressure in a manner that exceeds that of striking the bat at game speed swing speed against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game speeds. Such pressure would include, but is not limited to, compressing the bat, rolling the bat, vicing the bat or hitting the bat against an object such as a tree or pole. The bat has in any other way had its on field performance improved by physically changing the bat (other than by hitting the bat at game condition swing speeds against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game condition speeds).

Penalty for using illegal bats:

First Offense - If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01.C until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and/or ejection from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch.

Second Offense – If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

7.01.C.O. Protective Gear. As a general rule, USSSA continues its long standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate. Game conditions (temperature, equipment, rain, wind, visibility, field conditions, humidity, etc.) vary greatly from game to game and from field to field. In addition, the relative and absolute experience and skill levels of teams and players will vary from player to player and from team to team. Thus, USSSA encourages players to utilize any protective equipment that they deem appropriate. Such protective gear will be allowed in USSSA sanctioned play, unless by rule or by director/umpire ruling that such protective gear is disallowed as unsafe or as providing an unfair competitive advantage.

7.01D1 Altered Balls.

An Altered Ball is one which has had its physical structure changed in any way, including (but not limited to) balls that have been frozen, micro-waved, heated, melted, cooled, recovered, re-stitched, surface modified to be rougher or softer, etc. Altered Balls and the potential of a ball being altered and those suspected of altering, owning or using an altered ball (or determined to have altered, owned or used an Altered Ball) shall be viewed as falling under the same rules in place above for Altered bats, above.

7.01.F Uniforms

7.01.F.1 Shoes - In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats must be worn. In age divisions 13U – 18U, traditional metal baseball spikes may be worn.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – In age divisions that allow metal spikes, metal spikes or hard plastic spikes cannot be worn on synthetic mounds. Only tennis shoes or turf shoes are allowed on synthetic mounds.

7.01.F.2 Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – For league play matching tops and caps are recommended but not required. Non-duplicating numbers are required.

7.01.G The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup. In age divisions 4U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

7.01.H All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play. Bat/ball boys are not allowed

Rule 7.01.H Comment: If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he shall direct the violation to be corrected. If the violation is not immediately corrected, in the umpire's judgment, the umpire shall eject the offender from the game.

7.01.I Playing equipment including but not limited to the baseballs, bases, bats, catcher's gloves and mitts, first baseman's gloves and mitts, infielders and outfielders gloves and mitts, protective helmets, and uniforms 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 shall be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name.

7.01.J Manufacturers who plan innovative changes in baseball equipment for future play should submit same to the USSSA Baseball National Committee prior to production.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – All participants are required to remove ALL jewelry before entering the playing field. Sunglasses, if worn, must be covering the eyes. Medic alert necklaces are allowed as long as they stay tucked in.

7.02 Game Preliminaries –

7.02.A A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game if not designated prior to play and the "if" game in championship play. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games in single elimination brackets. In double elimination brackets, the highest seeded team will be the home team until the championship game. In the championship game, the team in the winners bracket will be the home team and a coin toss will determine the home team for the if game.

AAD/USSSA addendum - tournament play the higher seed in the elimination bracket will have the choice of home or visitor and all championship games the home team will be decided by a coin toss.

Rule 7.02.A Comment: For league play, a system to predetermine the home team is acceptable.

7.02.B In League, Qualifying Tournament and State Championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.

7.02.C In World Series play, time limits may be used in pool play and consolation bracket games with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

7.02.D Approved Team Line-ups:

AAD/USSSA Addendum – Lineups must be submitted on the approved AAD/USSSA Lineup card complete with all players present (first and last names and uniform numbers) as well as all adult coaches and their role for that game.

7.02.D.1 Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, ten (10) player line-up using an Extra Hitter (EH) or continuous line-up of all present, eligible, unformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.

7.02.D.1(a) If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

7.02.D.1(b) If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.

7.02.D.1(c) If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position. Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up. When using the continuous lineup and a player has to leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around.

7.02.E In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) baseball rules.

7.02.E.1 A Designated Hitter may be (not mandatory) selected for any one starting player and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.

7.02.E.2 A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the Designated Hitter in the starting line-up.

7.02.E.3 A Designated Hitter for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the line-up.

7.02.E.4 Failure to declare a Designated Hitter prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.

7.02.E.5 If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the Designated Hitter is used, that player becomes the new DH.

7.02.E.6 The player who was the Designated Hitter may re-enter pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.02.D.1(a).

7.02.E.7 A Designated Hitter and the player for whom the DH is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting order.

7.02.E.8 The role of the Designated Hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

7.02.E.8(a) The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the Designated Hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;

7.02.E.8(b) The Designated Hitter or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.

7.02.F Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

7.02.G A team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – In league play the number of players in the lineup may differ. Be sure to refer to the event specific rules.

7.03 Starting and Ending a Game –

7.03.A A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 4U – 12U and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U – 18U, unless the game is:

7.03.A.1 Extended because the score is tied after the completion of the regulation number of innings, in which case, play shall continue until the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning; or

7.03.A.2 Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or

7.03.A.3 Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or

7.03.A.4 Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.B has been met; or

7.03.A.5 Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.C has been met.

7.03.B An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning. In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – Run rules may vary in league and tournament play. Be sure to refer to the event specific rules.

7.03.C If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of God and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:

7.03.C.1 For a scheduled six (6) inning game, if three (3) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in two (2) innings or two and one half (2 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in three (3) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.

7.03.C.1(a) If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond three (3) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 7.03.C.1 & 7.03.C.1(a) shall be a suspended game.

7.03.C.2 For a scheduled seven (7) inning game, if four (4) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three and one half (3 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.

7.03.C.2(a) If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 7.03.C.2 & 7.03.C.2(a) shall be a suspended game.

7.03.D All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.03.C shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – for league play 11u and 12u games are seven innings. League games can end in a tie. For tournament play pool games can end in a tie. Be sure to refer to the event specific rules.

WEATHER SOP FOR OFFICIALS

As the official for your assigned field you have the ultimate responsibility in determining if the weather conditions warrant a stoppage in play or a cancellation of a game. If at any time you feel that either the field is no longer playable or lightening is too close to the fields you are required to stop play. If a delay is your decision, when the conditions improve, you and you alone decide when to resume the game.

If you feel it is necessary to halt play you must notify, (via text) both the UIC and Director of your specific field situation. After you get home you must notify the league email (abqusssa@aol.com) within 24 hours of the specific game situation to include the following:

Date:

Scheduled game time:

Field:

Start time:

Time play was suspended:

Home team name and score:

Visiting team name and score:

Inning play was suspended:

Top or bottom half of the inning:

Number of outs in the inning:

Plate official name:

Base official name:

7.04 The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner –

7.04.A An Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from either the pitcher or catcher. The four (4) pitches need not be thrown.

7.04.B At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If no players not presently in the line-up are available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules (if available) will be used without penalty.

7.04.C Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher.

Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

Rule 7.04.C Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion. **Rule 7.04.C Comment:** When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

7.05 The Pitcher –

7.05.A Leagues and tournaments shall adopt the following rules pertaining to the visit of the manager or a coach to the pitcher. This rule limits the number of visits a manager or a coach may make to any pitcher in any one (1) inning;

7.05.A.1 A second (2nd) visit to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the pitching position;

7.05.A.2 The manager or a coach is prohibited from making a second (2nd) visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but

7.05.A.3 If a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or a coach may make a second (2nd) visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher. A manager or a coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the eighteen (18) foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

7.05.B A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected. If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.05.C.7.

RULE 13.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP & EJECTIONS

13.01 All players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.

13.02 Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive shall at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party shall be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.

13.03 Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be barred / suspended pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.

13.04 Any coach, manager, sponsor or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.

13.05 Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of the game at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.

13.06 All persons ejected may be asked to leave the park and / or venue at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.

13.07 Abusive language or cursing shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall result in an automatic ejection.

13.08 Throwing of equipment shall result in an automatic ejection.

13.09 If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.

13.10 As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct shall be taken seriously. The leagues / tournaments your team will be participating in will include some of the finest baseball teams in the world. The level of competition will be high and at times fierce. Because of this, please remind all players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators to be extra aware of good sportsmanship.

AAD/USSSA Addendum – For league and tournament play the following restrictions exist:

- *1. Music played, during warm ups, is allowed as long as it is moderate in volume and does not contain offensive lyrics. No music is allowed during live ball situations and “walk up” music (during dead ball situations) must end when the batter reaches the box.*
- *2. Once a pitcher is “set”, excessive noise, (as deemed by the game officials) by the offensive team as an attempt to balk the pitcher is not allowed.*
- *Tobacco use is prohibited on the field or in the dugout*

RULE 14.00 – UMPIRES

14.01 All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.

RULE 15.00 – PROTESTS

15.01 Umpires will work to settle all situations on the field. Protests will be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the League / Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. If a call to be protested is the last recorded out of a game or on a game ending play, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. No protest will be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials will rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final.

15.02 The Protest fee is \$100.00 cash. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld.

Rule 15.02 Comment: Leagues may develop their own method of fee structure, recording and settling protests.

RULE 17.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED

17.01 Items not specifically covered herein including player eligibility shall be referred to the USSSA Baseball State Director with guidance from the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

MLB OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

2014 Edition



2014 Edition OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

Summary of Rule Changes for 2014

Note: Rule changes for 2014 are underlined in this edition of the Official Baseball Rules.

The Official Playing Rules Committee made the following changes that will be in effect for the 2014 season:

- Amended Rule 3.06 Comment regarding substitutions and double-switches.
- Amended Rule 4.05 Comment regarding base coaches touching runners on base.
- Amended Rule 6.02(b) Comment to nullify a balk caused by “inadvertent” actions by the batter. (Batter is no longer limited to stepping out of the batter’s box in order for the balk to be nullified.)
- Amended Rule 6.10(b)(10) to allow the game pitcher to pinch run only for the Designated Hitter.
- Added Experimental Rule 7.13 regarding collisions at home plate.
- Added Rule 8.02(b) Comment prohibiting pitchers from attaching anything to either hand, finger, or wrist.
- Added Rule 8.05(d) Comment regarding the pitcher throwing to an unoccupied base when a runner, in the umpire’s judgment, creates the impression he is attempting to advance to that base.
- Amended Rule 8.06 Comment to allow the manager or coach to leave the 18-foot circle without terminating a trip when the manager or coach does so temporarily to give the umpire a lineup change.
- Amended Rule 9.02(c) Comment regarding a how long the defense has to request a check-swing appeal, and, in particular, how long on a check-swing appeal that ends a half-inning.

In addition, revisions have been made to the Index.

Rule 1.01 to 1.03

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 objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent.

1.03 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 1.12 to 1.17 – Gloves / Helmets / Protective Equipment

1.12 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 or 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.

1.13 The first baseman may wear a leather glove or mitt not more than twelve 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 permanently fixed and cannot be enlarged, extended, widened, or deepened by the use of any materials or process whatever. 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.

1.14 Each fielder, other than the first baseman or 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 12" 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 7³/₄" 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 4¹/₂" at the top, not more than 5³/₄" deep, and shall be 3¹/₂" wide at its bottom. The opening of crotch shall not be more than 4¹/₂" at any point below its top. The webbing shall be secured at each 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.

1.15

- (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 1.15(a) or 1.15(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.

1.16 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 National Association 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, while fielding their position.
- (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 1.16 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.

1.17 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 Section 1.17 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.

Rule 2.00

2.00—Definitions of Terms.

(All definitions in Rule 2.00 are listed alphabetically.)

ADJUDGED is a judgment decision by the umpire.

An **APPEAL** is the act of a fielder in claiming violation of the rules by the offensive team.

A **BALK** is an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base, entitling all runners to advance one base.

A **BALL** is a pitch which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter.

Rule 2.00 (Ball) Comment: 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 6.05 (c) and 6.09 (b). If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he hit the ball in flight.

A **BASE** is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the canvas bags and the rubber plate which mark the base points.

A **BASE COACH** is a team member in uniform who is stationed in the coach’s box at first or third base to direct the batter and the runners.

A **BASE ON BALLS** is an award of first base granted to a batter who, during his time at bat, receives four pitches outside the strike zone.

A **BATTER** is an offensive player who takes his position in the batter’s box.

BATTER-RUNNER is a term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished his time at bat until he is put out or until the play on which he became a runner ends.

The **BATTER’S BOX** is the area within which the batter shall stand during his time at bat.

The **BATTERY** is the pitcher and catcher.

BENCH OR DUGOUT is the seating facilities reserved for players, substitutes and other team members in uniform when they are not actively engaged on the playing field.

A **BUNT** is a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield.

A **CALLED GAME** is one in which, for any reason, the umpire-in-chief terminates play.

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 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.

Rule 2.00 (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.

The **CATCHER** is the fielder who takes his position back of the home base.

The **CATCHER’S BOX** is that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball.

THE CLUB is a person or group of persons responsible for assembling the team personnel, providing the playing field and required facilities, and representing the team in relations with the league.

A **COACH** is a team member in uniform appointed by the manager to perform such duties as the manager may designate, such as but not limited to acting as base coach.

A **DEAD BALL** is a ball out of play because of a legally created temporary suspension of play.

The **DEFENSE** (or **DEFENSIVE**) is the team, or any player of the team, in the field.

A **DOUBLE-HEADER** is two regularly scheduled or rescheduled games, played in immediate succession.

A **DOUBLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which two offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

(a) A force double play is one in which both putouts are force plays.

(b) A reverse force double play is one in which the first out is a force play and the second out is made on a runner for whom the force is removed by reason of the first out. Examples of reverse force plays: runner on first, one out; batter grounds to first baseman, who steps on first base (one out) and throws to second baseman or shortstop for the second out (a tag play).

Another example: bases loaded, none out; batter grounds to third baseman, who steps on third base (one out); then throws to catcher for the second out (tag play).

DUGOUT (See definition of BENCH)

A **FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or that touches first, second or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight.

A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time he touches the ball.

Rule 2.00 (Fair Ball) Comment: If a fly ball lands in the infield between home and first base, or home and third base, and then bounces to foul territory without touching a player or umpire and before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball; or if the ball settles on foul territory or is touched by a player on foul territory, it is a foul ball. If a fly ball lands on or beyond first or third base and then bounces to foul territory, it is a fair hit.

Clubs, increasingly, are erecting tall foul poles at the fence line with a wire netting extending along the side of the pole on fair territory above the fence to enable the umpires more accurately to judge fair and foul balls.

FAIR TERRITORY is that part of the playing field within, and including the first base and third base lines, from home base to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards. All foul lines are in fair territory.

A **FIELDER** is any defensive player.

FIELDER'S CHOICE is the act of a fielder who handles a fair grounder and, instead of throwing to first base to put out the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to put out a preceding runner. The term is also used by scorers (a) to account for the advance of the batter-runner who takes one or more extra bases when the fielder who handles his safe hit attempts to put out a preceding runner; (b) to account for the advance of a runner (other than by stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to put out another runner; and (c) to account for the advance of a runner made solely because of the defensive team's indifference (undefended steal).

A **FLY BALL** is a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight.

A **FORCE PLAY** is a play in which a runner legally loses his right to occupy a base by reason of the batter becoming a runner.

Rule 2.00 (Force Play) Comment: Confusion regarding this play is removed by remembering that frequently the "force" situation is removed during the play. Example: Man on first, one out, ball hit sharply to first baseman who touches the bag and batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment and runner advancing to second must be tagged. If there had been a runner on third or second, and either of these runners scored before the tag-out at second, the run counts. Had the first baseman thrown to second and the ball then had been returned to first, the play at second was a force out, making two outs, and the return throw to first ahead of the runner would have made three outs. In that case, no run would score.

Example: Not a force out. One out. Runner on first and third. Batter flies out. Two out. Runner on third tags up and scores. Runner on first tries to retouch before throw from fielder reaches first baseman, but does not get back in time and is out. Three outs. If, in umpire's judgment, the runner from third touched home before the ball was held at first base, the run counts.

A **FORFEITED GAME** is a game declared ended by the umpire-in-chief in favor of the offended team by the score of 9 to 0, for violation of the rules.

A **FOUL BALL** is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that, while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.

A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the infielder is on foul or fair territory at the time he touches the ball.

Rule 2.00 (Foul Ball) Comment: A batted ball not touched by a fielder, which hits the pitcher's rubber and rebounds into foul territory, between home and first, or between home and third base is a foul ball.

FOUL TERRITORY is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

A **FOUL TIP** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand.

A **GROUND BALL** is a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

The **HOME TEAM** is the team on whose grounds the game is played, or if the game is played on neutral grounds, the home team shall be designated by mutual agreement.

ILLEGAL (or **ILLEGALLY**) is contrary to these rules.

An **ILLEGAL PITCH** is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; (2) a quick return pitch. An illegal pitch when runners are on base is a balk.

An **INFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the infield.

An **INFIELD FLY** is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly, if Fair."

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

Rule 2.00 (Infield Fly) Comment: On the infield fly rule the umpire is to rule whether the ball could ordinarily have been handled by an infielder—not by some arbitrary limitation such as the grass, or the base lines. The umpire must rule also that a ball is an infield fly, even if handled by an outfielder, if, in the umpire's judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder. The infield fly is in no sense to be considered an appeal play. The umpire's judgment must govern, and the decision should be made immediately.

When an infield fly rule is called, runners may advance at their own risk. If on an infield fly rule, the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of Rule 6.05(l). The infield fly rule takes precedence.

If interference is called during an Infield Fly, the ball remains alive until it is determined whether the ball is fair or foul. If fair, both the runner who interfered with the fielder and the batter are out. If foul, even if caught, the runner is out and the batter returns to bat.

IN FLIGHT describes a batted, thrown, or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.

IN JEOPARDY is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

An **INNING** is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three putouts for each team. Each team's time at bat is a half-inning.

INTERFERENCE

(a) Offensive interference is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules.

Rule 2.00 (Interference (a)) Comment: In the event the batter-runner has not reached first base, all runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch; provided, however, if during an intervening play at the plate with less than two outs a runner scores, and then the batter-runner is called out for interference outside the three-foot lane, the runner is safe and the run shall count.

(b) Defensive interference is an act by a fielder that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.

(c) Umpire's interference occurs (1) when a plate umpire hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play, or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder.

Rule 2.00 (Interference (c)) Comment: Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

(d) Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands and over the playing field, or goes on the playing field, and (1) touches a live ball or (2) touches a player and hinders an attempt to make a play on a live ball.

THE LEAGUE is a group of clubs whose teams play each other in a pre-arranged schedule under these rules for the league championship.

THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT is the league official charged with enforcing these Rules, fining or suspending any player, manager, coach or umpire for violation of these Rules, resolving any disputes involving these Rules or determining any protested games.

Rule 2.00 (League President) Comment: With respect to the Major Leagues, the functions of the League President pursuant to these Rules shall be carried out by the designees of the Commissioner of Baseball. The Commissioner may designate different officials to carry out different functions of a League President pursuant to these Rules.

LEGAL (or **LEGALLY**) is in accordance with these rules.

A **LIVE BALL** is a ball which is in play.

A **LINE DRIVE** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to a fielder without touching the ground.

THE MANAGER is a person appointed by the club to be responsible for the team's actions on the field, and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team. A player may be appointed manager.

(a) The club shall designate the manager to the league president 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.

OBSTRUCTION is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner.

Rule 2.00 (Obstruction) Comment: If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered "in the act of fielding a ball." It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, he can no longer be in the "act of fielding" the ball. For example: an infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes him and he continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, he very likely has obstructed the runner.

OFFENSE is the team, or any player of the team, at bat. **OFFICIAL SCORER.** See Rule 10.00.

ORDINARY EFFORT is the effort that a fielder of average skill at a position in that league or classification of leagues should exhibit on a play, with due consideration given to the condition of the field and weather conditions.

Rule 2.00 (Ordinary Effort) Comment: This standard, called for several times in the Official Scoring Rules (e.g., Rules 10.05(a)(3), 10.05(a)(4), 10.05(a)(6), 10.05(b)(3) (Base Hits); 10.08(b) (Sacrifices); 10.12(a)(1) Comment, 10.12(d)(2) (Errors); and 10.13(a), 10.13(b) (Wild Pitches and Passed Balls)) and in the Official Baseball Rules (e.g., Rule 2.00 (Infield Fly)), is an objective standard in regard to any particular fielder. In other words, even if a fielder makes his best effort, if that effort falls short of what an average fielder at that position in that league would have made in a situation, the official scorer should charge that fielder with an error.

An **OUT** is one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time at bat.

An **OUTFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the outfield, which is the area of the playing field most distant from home base.

OVERSLIDE (or **OVERSLIDING**) is the act of an offensive player when his slide to a base, other than when advancing from home to first base, is with such momentum that he loses contact with the base.

A **PENALTY** is the application of these rules following an illegal act.

The **PERSON** of a player or an umpire is any part of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

A **PITCH** is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher.

Rule 2.00 (Pitch) Comment: All other deliveries of the ball by one player to another are thrown balls.

A **PITCHER** is the fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter.

The pitcher's **PIVOT FOOT** is that foot which is in contact with the pitcher's plate as he delivers the pitch.

"**PLAY**" is the umpire's order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball.

A **QUICK RETURN** pitch is one made with obvious intent to catch a batter off balance. It is an illegal pitch.

REGULATION GAME. See Rules 4.10 and 4.11.

A **RETOUCH** is the act of a runner in returning to a base as legally required.

A **RUN** (or **SCORE**) is the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third and home bases in that order.

A **RUN-DOWN** is the act of the defense in an attempt to put out a runner between bases.

A **RUNNER** is an offensive player who is advancing toward, or touching, or returning to any base.

“**SAFE**” is a declaration by the umpire that a runner is entitled to the base for which he was trying.

SET POSITION is one of the two legal pitching positions.

SQUEEZE PLAY is a term to designate a play when a team, with a runner on third base, attempts to score that runner by means of a bunt.

A **STRIKE** is a legal pitch when so called by the umpire, which—

- (a) Is struck at by the batter and is missed;
- (b) Is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone;
- (c) Is fouled by the batter when he has less than two strikes;
- (d) Is bunted foul;
- (e) Touches the batter as he strikes at it;
- (f) Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or
- (g) Becomes a foul tip.

The **STRIKE ZONE** is that area over home plate the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The Strike Zone shall be determined from the batter’s stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball.

A **SUSPENDED GAME** is a called game which is to be completed at a later date.

A **TAG** is the action of a fielder in touching a base with his body while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball, or with his hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove. It is not a tag, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his touching a base or touching a runner, the fielder drops the ball. In establishing the validity of the tag, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball. If the fielder has made a tag and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the tag, the tag shall be adjudged to have been made.

A **THROW** is the act of propelling the ball with the hand and arm to a given objective and is to be distinguished, always, from the pitch.

A **TIE GAME** is a regulation game which is called when each team has the same number of runs.

“**TIME**” is the announcement by an umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

TOUCH. To touch a player or umpire is to touch any part of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

A **TRIPLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

A **WILD PITCH** is one so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that it cannot be handled with ordinary effort by the catcher.

WIND-UP POSITION is one of the two legal pitching positions.

Any reference in these Official Baseball Rules to “he,” “him” or “his” shall be deemed to be a reference to “she,” “her” or “hers,” as the case may be, when the person is a female.

3.00—Game Preliminaries.

3.01 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 Diagrams 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 league president. 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 3.01(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.

(f) Ensure that an official rosin bag is placed on the ground behind the pitcher's plate prior to the start of each game.

3.02 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 8.02(a)(2) through (6).

3.03 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. 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 substituted-for 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 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 3.03 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 8.03 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.

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

Rule 3.04 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.

3.05

- a) The pitcher named in the batting order handed the umpire-in-chief, as provided in Rules 4.01 (a) and 4.01 (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.
- b) If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the umpire-in-chief's judgment, incapacitates him for further play as a pitcher.
- c) 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.
- d) Rule 3.05(c) Comment: If a manager attempts to remove a pitcher in violation of Rule 3.05 (c) 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.

- e) 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 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.

3.06 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 3.06 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 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.

3.07 The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

(a) 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.

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

3.09 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.

3.10

(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 doubleheader. EXCEPTION: Any league may permanently authorize its president to suspend the application of this rule as to that league during the closing weeks of its 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 president, 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 doubleheader shall not be started because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field.

3.11 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.

3.12 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.

3.13 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.

3.14 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.

3.15 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, and officers of the law in uniform and watchmen or other employees of the home club. In case of unintentional interference with play by any person herein authorized to be on the playing field (except members of the team at bat who are participating in the game, or a base coach, any of whom interfere with a fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball; or an umpire) the ball is alive and in play. If the interference is intentional, the ball shall be dead at the moment of the interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

Rule 3.15 Comment: For interference with a fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball by members of the team at bat or base coaches, who are accepted in Rule 3.15, see Rule 7.11. See also Rules 5.09(b), 5.09(f) and 6.08(d), which cover interference by an umpire, and Rule 7.08(b), which covers interference by a runner.

The question of intentional or unintentional interference shall be decided on the basis of the person's action. For example: a bat boy, ball attendant, policeman, etc., who tries to avoid being touched by a thrown or batted ball but still is touched by the ball would be involved in unintentional interference. If, however, he kicks the ball or picks it up or pushes it, that is considered intentional interference, regardless of what his thought may have been.

PLAY: Batter hits ball to shortstop, who fields ball but throws wild past first baseman. The coach at first base, to avoid being hit by the ball, falls to the ground and the first baseman on his way to retrieve the wild thrown ball, runs into the coach. The batter-runner finally ends up on third base. Whether the umpire should call interference on the part of the coach is up to the judgment of the umpire and if the umpire felt that the coach did all he could to avoid interfering with the play, no interference need be called. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the coach was attempting to make it appear that he was trying not to interfere, the umpire should rule interference.

3.16 When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

APPROVED RULING: If spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

Rule 3.16 Comment: There is a difference between a ball which has been thrown or batted into the stands, touching a spectator thereby being out of play even though it rebounds onto the field and a spectator going onto the field or reaching over, under or through a barrier and touching a ball in play or touching or otherwise interfering with a player. In the latter case it is clearly intentional and shall be dealt with as intentional interference as in Rule 3.15. Batter and runners shall be placed where in the umpire's judgment they would have been had the interference not occurred.

No interference shall be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, and rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. However, should a spectator reach out on the playing field side of such fence, railing or rope, and plainly prevent the fielder from catching the ball, then the batsman should be called out for the spectator's interference.

Example: Runner on third base, one out and a batter hits a fly ball deep to the outfield (fair or foul). Spectator clearly interferes with the outfielder attempting to catch the fly ball. Umpire calls the batter out for spectator interference. Ball is dead at the time of the call. Umpire decides that because of the distance the ball was hit, the runner on third base would have scored after the catch if the fielder had caught the ball which was interfered with, therefore, the runner is permitted to score. This might not be the case if such fly ball was interfered with a short distance from home plate.

3.17 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 3.17 Comment: Players on the disabled 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 as warming up a pitcher, bench-jockeying, etc. Disabled players are not allowed to enter the playing surface at any time or for any purpose during the game.

3.18 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.

4.00—Starting and Ending a Game.

4.01 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 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 6.10(b). 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.
- (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 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.

Rule 4.01 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 4.01(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.

4.02 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 shall call "Play" and the game shall start.

4.03 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.
4.04 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.

4.05

- (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 (1) be in team uniform, and (2) remain within the coach's box at all times.

PENALTY: The offending base coach shall be removed from the game, and shall leave the playing field.

Rule 4.05 Comment: It has been common practice for many years for some coaches to put one foot outside the coach's box or stand astride or otherwise be slightly outside the coaching box lines. Until a batted ball passes a coach, a coach is not permitted to position himself closer to home plate than the coach's box nor closer to fair territory than the coach's box. Otherwise, a coach shall not be considered out of the box unless the opposing manager complains, in which case the umpire shall strictly enforce the rule and require all coaches (on both teams) to remain in the coach's box at all times.

It is also common practice for a coach who has a play at his base to leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance or return to a base. This may be allowed 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.

4.06

- (a) No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer or batboy shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box or on the playing field, or elsewhere—
 - (1) Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign a demonstration by spectators;
 - (2) Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, an umpire, or any spectator;
 - (3) Call "Time," or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit a balk.
 - (4) Make intentional contact with the umpire in any manner.
- (b) No fielder shall take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.

PENALTY: The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field, and, if a balk is made, it shall be nullified.

4.07 When a manager, player, coach or trainer is ejected from a game, he shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. He shall remain in the club house or change to street clothes and either leave the park or take a seat in the grandstand well removed from the vicinity of his team's bench or bullpen.

Rule 4.07 Comment: If a manager, coach or player is under suspension he may not be in the dugout or press box during the course of a game.

4.08 When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues—

PENALTY: The umpire shall order the offenders from the bench to the club house. If he is unable to detect the offender, or offenders, he may clear the bench of all substitute players. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

4.09 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.
- (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 runner on third to advance, 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 4.09(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 4.09 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 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.

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.

4.10

- (a) A regulation game consists of nine innings, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the ninth inning or only a fraction of it, or (2) because the umpire-in-chief calls the game. **EXCEPTION:** National Association leagues may adopt a rule providing that one or both games of a doubleheader shall be seven innings in length. In such games, any of these rules applying to the ninth inning shall apply to the seventh inning.
- (b) If the score is tied after nine completed innings play shall continue until (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.
- (c) If a game is called, it is a regulation game:
 - (1) If five innings have been completed;
 - (2) If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half-innings than the visiting team has scored in five completed half-innings;
 - (3) If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fifth inning to tie the score.
- (d) If a regulation game is called with the score tied, it shall become a suspended game. See Rule 4.12.
- (e) If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, the umpire-in-chief shall declare it "No Game."
- (f) A League President may determine whether rain checks will be honored for any regulation or suspended game that has progressed to or beyond a point of play described in 4.10(c).

Rule 4.10 Comment: The Major Leagues have determined that Rules 4.10(c) and 4.10(e) do 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.

4.11 The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.

- (a) The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the ninth inning if the home team is ahead.
- (b) The game ends when the ninth inning is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.
- (c) If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the ninth inning (or its half of an extra inning after a tie), the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored. EXCEPTION: If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runner and all runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate.

APPROVED RULING: The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the ninth or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored, unless there are two out and the winning run has not yet reached home plate when the runner passes another, in which case the inning is over and only those runs that scored before the runner passes another shall count.

- (d) A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, unless it becomes a suspended game pursuant to Rule 4.12(a).

4.12 SUSPENDED GAMES.

- (a) A game shall become a suspended game that must be completed at a future date if the game is terminated for any of the following reasons:
 - (1) A curfew imposed by law;
 - (2) A time limit permissible under league rules;
 - (3) Light failure or malfunction of a mechanical field device under control of the home club. (Mechanical field device shall include automatic tarpaulin or water removal equipment);
 - (4) Darkness, when a law prevents the lights from being turned on;
 - (5) Weather, if a regulation game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead; or
 - (6) It is a regulation game that is called with the score tied.
 National Association Leagues may also adopt the following rules for suspended games. (If adopted by a National Association League, Rule 4.10(e) would not apply to their games.):
 - (7) The game has not become a regulation game (4½ innings with the home team ahead, or 5 innings with the visiting club ahead or tied).
 - (8) If a game is suspended before it becomes a regulation game, and is continued prior to another regularly scheduled game, the regularly scheduled game shall be seven innings in length. See the exception described in Rule 4.10(a).
 - (9) If a game is suspended after it is a regulation game, and is continued prior to another regularly scheduled game, the regularly scheduled game shall be a nine-inning game.

EXCEPTION: Optional Rules 4.12(a)(7), 4.12(a)(8) and 4.12(a)(9) for National Association Leagues shall not apply to the last scheduled game between the two teams during the championship season. A National Association League may adopt any of Rules 4.12(a)(7), 4.12(a)(8) and 4.12(a)(9) for its post-season games.

No game called because of a curfew (Rule 4.12(a)(1)), weather (Rule 4.12(a)(5)), a time limit (Rule 4.12(a)(2)) or with a tied score (Rule 4.12(a)(6)) shall be a suspended game unless it has progressed far enough to have been a regulation game pursuant to Rule 4.10(c). A game called pursuant to Rules 4.12(a)(3) or 4.12(a)(4) shall be a suspended game at any time after it starts.

NOTE: Weather and similar conditions—Rules 4.12(a)(1) through 4.12(a)(5)— shall take precedence in determining whether a called game shall be a suspended game. If a game is halted by weather, and subsequent light failure or an intervening curfew or time limit prevents its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. If a game is halted by light failure, and weather or field conditions prevent its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. A game can only be considered a suspended game if stopped for any of the six reasons specified in Rule 4.12(a).

Rule 4.12

- (a) Comment: The Major Leagues have determined that Rule 4.12(a) 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.
- (b) A suspended game shall be resumed and completed as follows:
 - (1) Immediately preceding the next scheduled single game between the two clubs on the same grounds; or
 - (2) Immediately preceding the next scheduled doubleheader between the two clubs on the same grounds, if no single game remains on the schedule; or

(3) If suspended on the last scheduled date between the two clubs in that city, transferred and played on the grounds of the opposing club, if possible;

(i) Immediately preceding the next scheduled single game, or

(ii) Immediately preceding the next scheduled doubleheader, if no single game remains on the schedule.

(4) Any suspended game not completed prior to the last scheduled game between the two teams during the championship season shall become a called game, as follows:

(i) If such game has progressed far enough to become a regulation game, and one team is ahead, the team that is ahead shall be declared the winner (unless the game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead, in which case the score upon the completion of the last full inning shall stand for purposes of this Rule 4.12(b)(4));

(ii) If such game has progressed far enough to become a regulation game, and the score is tied, the game shall be declared a “tie game” (unless the game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to tie the game, and the home team has not retied the game, in which case the score upon the completion of the last full inning shall stand for purposes of this Rule 4.12(b)(4)). A tie game is to be replayed in its entirety, unless the league president determines that playing the rescheduled game is not necessary to affect the league championship; or

(iii) If such game has not progressed far enough to become a regulation game, the game shall be declared “No Game.” In such case, the game is to be replayed in its entirety, unless the league president determines that playing the rescheduled game is not necessary to affect the league championship.

Rule 4.12(b) Comment: The Major Leagues have determined that Rule 4.12(b) does not apply to any Wild Card, Division Series, and League Championship Series or World Series games or for any additional Major League championship season game played to break a tie.

(c) A suspended game shall be resumed at the exact point of suspension of the original game. The completion of a suspended game is a continuation of the original game. The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any player may be replaced by a player who had not been in the game prior to the suspension. No player removed before the suspension may be returned to the lineup.

A player who was not with the club when the game was suspended may be used as a substitute, even if he has taken the place of a player no longer with the club who would not have been eligible because he had been removed from the lineup before the game was suspended.

Rule 4.12(c) Comment: If immediately prior to the call of a suspended game, a substitute pitcher has been announced but has not retired the side or pitched until the batter becomes a base runner, such pitcher, when the suspended game is later resumed may, but is not required to start the resumed portion of the game. However, if he does not start he will be considered as having been substituted for and may not be used in that game.

Rule 4.15 to 4.19

4.15 A game may be forfeited to the opposing team when a team—

(a) Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within five minutes after the umpire-in-chief has called “Play” at the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire-in-chief’s judgment, unavoidable;

(b) Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game;

(c) Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire-in-chief;

(d) Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one minute after the umpire-in-chief has called “Play;”

(e) After warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;

(f) Fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire’s order for removal of a player from the game;

(g) Fails to appear for the second game of a doubleheader within twenty minutes after the close of the first game unless the umpire-in-chief of the first game shall have extended the time of the intermission.

4.16 A game shall be forfeited to the visiting team if, after it has been suspended, the order of the umpire to groundskeepers respecting preparation of the field for resumption of play are not complied with.

4.17 A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team is unable or refuses to place nine players on the field.

4.18 If the umpire-in-chief declares a game forfeited he shall transmit a written report to the league president within 24 hours thereafter, but failure of such transmittal shall not affect the forfeiture.

4.19 **PROTESTING GAMES.** Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final. Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered unless in the opinion of the League President the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning the game.

Rule 4.19 Comment: Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplication of the rules the protest will not be recognized unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play. A protest arising on a game-ending play may be filed until 12 noon the following day with the league office.

Rules 5.01 to 5.09

5.00—Putting the Ball in Play. Live Ball.

5.01 At the time set for beginning the game the umpire-in-chief shall call "Play."

5.02 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. 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 5.02 Comment: Should a ball come partially apart in a game, it is in play until the play is completed.

5.03 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.

5.04 The offensive team's objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.

5.05 The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.

5.06 When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally he shall score one run for his team.

Rule 5.06 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.

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

5.08 If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out.

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

- (a) A pitched ball touches a batter, or his clothing, while in his legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance;
- (b) 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.

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

Rule 5.09(b) Comment: Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

- (c) A balk is committed; runners advance; (See Penalty 8.05.)
- (d) A ball is illegally batted; runners return;
- (e) 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;
- (f) 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; runner 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 5.09(f) 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.

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

Rule 5.09(g) 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.

Rule 5.09 to 5.10

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.

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

5.10 The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire-in-chief shall call "Time"—

(a) When in his judgment weather, darkness or similar conditions make immediate further play impossible;

(b) 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.

(c) When an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire;

(1) 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.

(d) When a manager requests "Time" for a substitution, or for a conference with one of his players.

(e) When the umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause.

(f) When a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field. As pertains to runners, the provisions of 7.04(c) shall prevail.

If a fielder after making a catch steps into a bench, but does not fall, the ball is in play and runners may advance at their own peril.

(g) When an umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field.

(h) Except in the cases stated in paragraphs (b) and (c)(1) of this rule, no umpire shall call "Time" while a play is in progress.

Rule 5.11

5.11 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.

6.00—the Batter.

6.01

(a) Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that his name appears in his team's batting order.

(b) 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.

6.02

(a) The batter shall take his position in the batter's box promptly when it is his time at bat.

(b) 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 6.02(b) 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 resin 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 6.02(d).

The following two paragraphs are additional material for Rule 6.02(b) Comment, for Major League play only:

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 6.02(b) Comment, for National Association play (in lieu of the additional two paragraphs, above, that apply to Major 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. The umpire shall call an automatic strike if Rule 6.02(d)(1) calls for such sanction.

- (c) 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 6.02(c) 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 6.02(c) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(c).

(d) The following rule shall be in effect for all National Association Leagues:

- (1) 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) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;
 - (iii) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";
 - (iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;
 - (v) The batter feints a bunt;
 - (vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;
 - (vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or
 - (viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed in Rule 6.02(d)(1)(i) through (viii) applies, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. The umpire shall award additional strikes, without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch, if the batter remains outside the batter's box and further delays play.

Rule 6.02(d)(1) Comment: The umpire has the discretion to issue a warning to a batter in lieu of calling an automatic strike for the batter's first violation of Rule 6.02(d)(1) in a game, so long as the batter's violation is judged to be brief and inadvertent. 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 6.02(d)

(1) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(d)(1).

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

- (i) making a substitution; or

(ii) a conference by either team.

Rule 6.02(d) 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.

6.03 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.

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

6.05 A batter is out when—

- (a) His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;
Rule 6.05(a) 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, 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 7.04(c) Comment.
- (b) A third strike is legally caught by the catcher;
Rule 6.05(b) 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 the catcher's glove and then goes on through and is caught by both hands against his body or protector, before the ball touches the ground, it is a strike, and if third strike, batter is out. If smothered against his body or protector, it is a catch provided the ball struck the catcher's glove or hand first.
- (c) A third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out;
- (d) He bunts foul on third strike;
- (e) An Infield Fly is declared;
- (f) He attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him;
- (g) His fair ball touches him before touching a fielder. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter's box, see Rule 6.03, 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;
- (h) 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 6.03, 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 6.05(h) 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 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 baserunner 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.

- (i) 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;
- (j) After a third strike or after he hits a fair ball, he or first base is tagged before he touches first base;
- (k) 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 6.05(k) 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.

- (l) 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.

- (m) 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 6.05(m) 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.

- (n) 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.
- (o) A member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to catch or field a batted ball. See Rule 7.11. For interference by a runner, see Rule 7.08(b).

6.06 A batter is out for illegal action when—

- (a) He hits a ball with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.

Rule 6.06(a) Comment: If a batter hits a ball fair or foul while out of the batter's box, he shall be called out. Umpires should pay particular attention to the position of the batter's feet if he attempts to hit the ball while he is being intentionally passed. A batter cannot jump or step out of the batter's box and hit the ball.

- (b) He steps from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;
- (c) He interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher's play at home base. EXCEPTION: Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.

Rule 6.06(c) Comment: If the batter interferes with the catcher, the plate umpire shall call "interference." The batter is out and the ball dead. No player may advance on such interference (offensive interference) and all runners must return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference.

If, however, the catcher makes a play and the runner attempting to advance is put out, it is to be assumed there was no actual interference and that runner is out—not the batter. Any other runners on the base at the time may advance as the ruling is that there is no actual interference if a runner is retired. In that case play proceeds just as if no violation had been called.

If a batter strikes at a ball and misses and swings so hard he carries the bat all the way around and, in the umpire's judgment, unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball in back of him on the backswing, it shall be called a strike only (not interference). The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.

- (d) He uses or attempts to use a bat that, in the umpire's judgment, has been altered or tampered with in such a way to improve the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes, bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc.

No advancement on the bases will be allowed and any out or outs made during a play shall stand.

In addition to being called out, the player shall be ejected from the game and may be subject to additional penalties as determined by his League President.

Rule 6.06(d) Comment: A batter shall be deemed to have used or attempted to use an illegal bat if he brings such a bat into the batter's box.

6.07 BATTING OUT OF TURN.

- (a) A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when he fails to bat in his proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his place.
- (1) The proper batter may take his place in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.

- (b) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall (1) declare the proper batter out; and (2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

NOTE: If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball, such advance is legal.

- (c) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of his time at bat become legal.

(1) When the proper batter is called out because he has failed to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter thus called out;

(2) When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.

Rule 6.07 Comment: The umpire shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams.

There are two fundamentals to keep in mind: When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.

APPROVED RULING

To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first-inning batting order as follows:

Abel-Baker-Charles-Daniel-Edward-Frank-George-Hooker-Irwin.

PLAY (1). Baker bats. With the count 2 balls and 1 strike, (a) the offensive team discovers the error or (b) the defensive team appeals. RULING: In either case, Abel replaces Baker, with the count on him 2 balls and 1 strike.

PLAY (2). Baker bats and doubles. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Charles. RULING: (a) Abel is called out and Baker is the proper batter; (b) Baker stays on second and Charles is the proper batter.

PLAY (3). Abel walks. Baker walks. Charles forces Baker. Edward bats in Daniel's turn. While Edward is at bat, Abel scores and Charles goes to second on a wild pitch. Edward grounds out, sending Charles to third. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Daniel. RULING: (a) Abel's run counts and Charles is entitled to second base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first base. Charles must return to second base because his advance to third resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel is called out, and Edward is the proper batter; (b) Abel's run counts and Charles stays on third. The proper batter is Frank.

PLAY (4). With the bases full and two out. Hooker bats in Frank's turn, and triples, scoring three runs. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately, or (b) after a pitch to George. RULING: (a) Frank is called out and no runs score. George is the proper batter to lead off the second inning; (b) Hooker stays on third and three runs score. Irwin is the proper batter.

PLAY (5). After Play (4)(b) above, George continues at bat. (a) Hooker is picked off third base for the third out, or (b) George flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the proper leadoff batter in the second inning? RULING: (a) Irwin. He became the proper batter as soon as the first pitch to George legalized Hooker's triple; (b) Hooker. When no appeal was made, the first pitch to the leadoff batter of the opposing team legalized George's time at bat.

PLAY (6). Daniel walks and Abel comes to bat. Daniel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel, Abel is out, Daniel is removed from base, and Baker is the proper batter. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Abel. Daniel's walk is now legalized, and Edward thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward can replace Abel at any time before Abel is put out or becomes a runner. He does not do so. Abel flies out, and Baker comes to bat. Abel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker, Edward is out, and the proper batter is Frank. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker. Abel's out is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker. Baker walks. Charles is the proper batter. Charles flies out. Now Daniel is the proper batter, but he is on second base. Who is the proper batter? RULING: The proper batter is Edward. When the proper batter is on base, he is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper batter.

6.08 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—

- (a) Four “balls” have been called by the umpire;

Rule 6.08(a) Comment: A batter who is entitled to first base because of a base on balls 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.

- (b) He is touched by a pitched ball which he is not attempting to hit unless (1) The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or (2) 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.

- (c) 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 6.08(c) 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 7.04 (d).

Rule 6.08 to 6.09

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 7.07.

If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 6.08(c). In such cases, the umpire shall call “Time” and the pitcher and batter start over from “scratch.”

- (d) 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.

6.09 The batter becomes a runner when—

- (a) He hits a fair ball;

- (b) 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 6.09(b) 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.

- (c) 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;

- (d) 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;

- (e) 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;

- (f) 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;
- (g) 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;
- (h) 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.

6.10 Any League may elect to use Rule 6.10(b), which shall be called the Designated Hitter Rule.

(a) 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.

(b) 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 6.10(b)

(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 4.01 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.

(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

- (i) 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
 - (ii) 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 that occurred before the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief shall count, subject to Rule 6.07 (Batting out of Turn).
- (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.

7.00—the Runner.

7.01 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 7.01 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.

7.02 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 5.09. In such cases, the runner may go directly to his original base.

7.03

- (a) 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 7.03(b) applies.
- (b) 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.

7.04 Each runner, other than the batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one base when—

- (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 7.04(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, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field;

Rule 7.04(c) Comment: If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should fall into a stand or among spectators or into the dugout or any other out-of-play area while in possession of the ball after making a legal catch, or fall while in the dugout after making a legal catch, 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 fell into, or in, 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;

(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.

7.05 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 7.05(b) through 7.05(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.

(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 7.05(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 stand.

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 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 7.05 (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.

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 7.05(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.

Rule 7.05 to 7.07

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.

7.06 When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction."

- (a) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he had last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.

Rule 7.06(a) Comment: When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, the umpire shall signal obstruction in the same manner that he calls "Time," with both hands overhead. The ball is immediately dead when this signal is given; however, should a thrown ball be in flight before the obstruction is called by the umpire, the runners are to be awarded such bases on wild throws as they would have been awarded had not obstruction occurred. On a play where a runner was trapped between second and third and obstructed by the third baseman going into third base while the throw is in flight from the shortstop, if such throw goes into the dugout the obstructed runner is to be awarded home base. Any other runners on base in this situation would also be awarded two bases from the base they last legally touched before obstruction was called.

- (b) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "Time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.

Rule 7.06(b) Comment: Under 7.06(b) when the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base which, in the umpire's judgment, he would have been awarded because of being obstructed, he does so at his own peril and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call. **NOTE:** The catcher, without the ball in his possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The base line belongs to the runner and the catcher should be there only when he is fielding a ball or when he already has the ball in his hand.

7.07 If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or his bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference and the ball is dead.

7.08 Any runner is out when—

- (a) (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 7.08(a) 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 valid. If there are two out, home run would not count (see Rule 7.12). 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.

- (b) He intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball;

Rule 7.08(b) Comment: A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not.

If, however, the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when he hinders the fielder, he shall not be called out unless, in the umpire's judgment, such hindrance, whether it occurs on fair or foul territory, is intentional. If the umpire declares the hindrance intentional, the following penalty shall apply: With less than two out, the umpire shall declare both the runner and batter out. With two out, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

If, in a run-down between third base and home plate, the succeeding runner has advanced and is standing on third base when the runner in a run-down is called out for offensive interference, the umpire shall send the runner standing on third base back to second base. This same principle applies if there is a run-down between second and third base and succeeding runner has reached second (the reasoning is that no runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until he legally has reached the next succeeding base).

- (c) 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: (1) 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: (2) 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.

- (d) 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 7.08(d) 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.

- (e) 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 7.08(e) 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.

- (f) He is touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball 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 7.08(f) Comment: If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead.

If runner is touched by an Infield Fly when he is not touching his base, both runner and batter are out.

- (g) 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;
- (h) He passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;
- (i) 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 7.08(i) 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.

- (j) 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 7.08(j) Comment: Runner who touches first base in overrunning and is declared safe by the umpire has, within the intent of Rule 4.09(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 7.08(j).

- (k) 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 7.08 to 7.09

Rule 7.08(k) 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.

- (l) A play on him is being made and a member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to field a thrown ball. See Rule 7.11. For interference by a runner, see Rule 7.08(b).

7.09 It is interference by a batter or a runner when—

- (a) After a third strike he 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;

Rule 7.09(a) 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.

- (b) He intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 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;

- (e) 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;

Rule 7.09(e) Comment: If the batter or a runner continues to advance after he has been put out, he shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.

- (f) 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.
- (g) 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 also 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.
- (h) 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.
- (i) With a runner on third base, the base coach leaves his box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;
- (j) 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 a ball;

Rule 7.09(j) Comment: When a catcher and batter-runner going to first base have contact when the catcher is fielding the ball, there is generally no violation and nothing should be called. "Obstruction" by a fielder attempting to field a ball should be called only in very flagrant and violent cases because the rules give him the right of way, but of course such "right of way" is not a license to, for example, intentionally trip a runner even though fielding the ball. If the catcher is fielding the ball and the first baseman or pitcher obstructs a runner going to first base "obstruction" shall be called and the base runner awarded first base.

- (k) A fair ball touches him on fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, and touches a runner immediately back of him, or touches the runner after having been deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the fielder, and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder has missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference.

PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE: The runner is out and the ball is dead. 7.10 Any runner shall be called out, on appeal, when—

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

Rule 7.10(a) 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.

- (b) 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: (1) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. (2) 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 7.10(b) 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-run-ner 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.

- (c) He overruns or overrides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and he or the base is tagged;
- (d) 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.

Rule 7.10 to 7.12

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 7.10 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 7.12.

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

7.11 The players, coaches or any member of a team at bat shall vacate any space (including either dugouts or bullpens) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball. If a member of the team at bat (other than a runner) hinders a fielder’s attempt to catch or field a batted ball, the ball is dead, the batter is declared out and all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the pitch. If a member of the team at bat (other than a runner) hinders a fielder’s attempt to field a thrown ball, the ball is dead, the runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out and all runners return to the last legally occupied base at the time of the interference.

7.12 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.

Rule 7.13

7.13 COLLISIONS AT HOME PLATE.

(1) A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate). If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the umpire shall declare the runner out (even if the player covering home plate loses possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

Rule 7.13(1) Comment: The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner’s lowering of the shoulder, or the runner’s pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 7.13. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 7.13. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner’s buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.

(2) Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation of this Rule 7.13 if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in order to field a throw, and the umpire determines that the catcher could not have fielded the ball without blocking the pathway of the runner and that contact with the runner was unavoidable.

Rule 8.01

8.00—The Pitcher.

8.01 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 8.01 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 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.

- (a) 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 8.01(a) 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:

- (1) Deliver the ball to the batter, or
 - (2) Step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or
 - (3) 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.
- (b) 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 8.01(b) 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 8.01(b) 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 8.05(e) Comment.

- (c) 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 8.01(c) Comment: The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by the step directly toward the base is a balk.

- (d) If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

Rule 8.01(d) Comment: A ball which slips out of a pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line shall be called a ball; otherwise it will be called no pitch. This would be a balk with men on base.

(e) 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 8.01(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) 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.

8.02 The pitcher shall not—

(a) (1) While in the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's plate, touch the ball after touching his mouth or lips, or touch his mouth or lips while he is in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pitcher must clearly wipe the fingers of his pitching hand dry before touching the ball or the pitcher's plate. EXCEPTION: Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the umpire prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his hand.

PENALTY: For violation of this part of this rule the umpires shall immediately remove the ball from play and issue a warning to the pitcher. Any subsequent violation shall be called a ball. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batsman or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation. Repeat offenders shall be subject to a fine by the League President.

1. expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove;
2. rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing;
3. apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;
4. Deface the ball in any manner; or
5. Deliver a ball altered in a manner prescribed by Rule 8.02(a)(2) through (5) or what is called the "shine" ball, "spit" ball, "mud" ball or "emery" ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub the ball between his bare hands.

Rule 8.02

PENALTY: For violation of any part of Rules 8.02 (a)(2) through (6):

- (a) The pitcher shall be ejected immediately from the game and shall be suspended automatically. In National Association Leagues, the automatic suspension shall be for 10 games.
- (b) If a play follows the violation called by the umpire, the manager of the team at bat may advise the umpire-in-chief that he elects to 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 no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.
- (c) Even though the team at bat elects to take the play, the violation shall be recognized and the penalties in subsection (a) will still be in effect.
- (d) If the manager of the team at bat does not elect to accept the play, the umpire-in-chief shall call an automatic ball and, if there are any runners on base, a balk.
- (e) The umpire shall be sole judge on whether any portion of this rule has been violated.

Rules 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6) Comment: If a pitcher violates either Rule 8.02(a)(2) or Rule 8.02(a)(3) and, in the judgment of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend, by his act, to alter the characteristics of a pitched ball, then the umpire may, in his discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of applying the penalty set forth for violations of Rules 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6). If the pitcher persists in violating either of those Rules, however, the umpire should then apply the penalty.

Rule 8.02(a) Comment: If at any time the ball hits the rosin bag it is in play. In the case of rain or wet field, the umpire may instruct the pitcher to carry the rosin bag in his hip pocket. A pitcher may use the rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to his bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to his glove or dust any part of his uniform with the rosin bag.

- (b) Have on his person, or in his possession, any foreign substance. For such infraction of this section (b) the penalty shall be immediate ejection from the game. In addition, the pitcher shall be suspended automatically. In National Association Leagues, the automatic suspension shall be for 10 games.

Rule 8.02(b) Comment: The pitcher may not attach anything to either hand, any finger or either wrist (e.g., Band-Aid, tape, Super Glue, bracelet, etc.). The umpire shall determine if such attachment is indeed a foreign substance for the purpose of Rule 8.02(b), but in no case may the pitcher be allowed to pitch with such attachment to his hand, finger or wrist.

- (c) Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner.

PENALTY: If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher shall be removed from the game.

- (d) Intentionally Pitch at the Batter.

If, in the umpire's judgment, such a violation occurs, the umpire may elect either to:

1. Expel the pitcher, or the manager and the pitcher, from the game, or
2. May warn the pitcher and the manager of both teams that another such pitch will result in the immediate expulsion of that pitcher (or a replacement) and the manager.

If, in the umpire's judgment, circumstances warrant, both teams may be officially "warned" prior to the game or at any time during the game. (League Presidents may take additional action under authority provided in Rule 9.05)

Rule 8.02(d) Comment: Team personnel may not come onto the playing surface to argue or dispute a warning issued under Rule 8.02(d). If a manager, coach or player leaves the dugout or his position to dispute a warning, he should be warned to stop. If he continues, he is subject to ejection.

To pitch at a batter's head is unsportsmanlike and highly dangerous. It should be—and is—condemned by everybody. Umpires should act without hesitation in enforcement of this rule.

8.03 When a pitcher takes his position at the beginning of each inning, or when he relieves another pitcher, he shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight preparatory pitches to his catcher during which play shall be suspended. A league by its own action may limit the number of preparatory pitches to less than eight preparatory pitches. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. 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.

Rule 8.04 to 8.05

8.04 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.

8.05 If there is a runner, or runners, it is a balk when—

- (a) The pitcher, while touching his plate, makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch and fails to make such delivery;

Rule 8.05(a) Comment: If a left-handed or right-handed pitcher swings his free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's rubber, he is required to pitch to the batter except to throw to second base on a pick-off play.

- (b) The pitcher, while touching his plate, feints a throw to first or third base and fails to complete the throw;

- (c) The pitcher, while touching his plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base;

Rule 8.05(c) Comment: Requires the pitcher, while touching his plate, to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base. If a pitcher turns or spins off of his free foot without actually stepping or if he turns his body and throws before stepping, it is a balk.

A pitcher is to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base and is required to throw (except to second base) because he steps. It is a balk if, with runners on first and third, the pitcher steps toward third and does not throw, merely to bluff the runner back to third; then seeing the runner on first start for second, turn and step toward and throw to first base. It is legal for a pitcher to feint a throw to second base.

- (d) The pitcher, while touching his plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play;

Rule 8.05(d) Comment: When determining whether the pitcher throws or feints a throw to an unoccupied base for the purpose of making a play, the umpire should consider whether a runner on the previous base demonstrates or otherwise creates an impression of his intent to advance to such unoccupied base.

Rule 8.05

(e) The pitcher makes an illegal pitch;

Rule 8.05(e) Comment: A quick pitch is an illegal pitch. Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box. With runners on base the penalty is a balk; with no runners on base, it is a ball. The quick pitch is dangerous and should not be permitted.

(f) The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while he is not facing the batter;

(g) The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch while he is not touching the pitcher's plate;

(h) The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;

Rule 8.05(h) Comment: Rule 8.05(h) shall not apply when a warning is given pursuant to Rule 8.02(c) (which prohibits intentional delay of a game by throwing to fielders not in an attempt to put a runner out). If a pitcher is ejected pursuant to Rule 8.02(c) for continuing to delay the game, the penalty in Rule 8.05(h) shall also apply. Rule 8.04 (which sets a time limit for a pitcher to deliver the ball when the bases are unoccupied) applies only when there are no runners on base.

(i) The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate, he feints a pitch;

(j) The pitcher, after coming to a legal pitching position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;

(k) The pitcher, while touching his plate, accidentally or intentionally has the ball slip or fall out of his hand or glove;

(l) The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;

(m) The pitcher delivers the pitch from Set Position without coming to a stop.

PENALTY: The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out, unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk.

APPROVED RULING: In cases where a pitcher balks and throws wild, either to a base or to home plate, a runner or runners may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled at his own risk.

Rule 8.05 to 8.06

APPROVED RULING: A runner who misses the first base to which he is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

Rule 8.05 Comment: Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

(a) Straddling the pitcher's rubber without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.

(b) With a runner on first base the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

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

(a) This rule limits the number of trips a manager or coach may make to any one pitcher in any one inning;

(b) A second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the game;

(c) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a second visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but

(d) 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 8.06 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.

Rule 8.06

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

The substitute pitcher will be allowed eight preparatory pitches or more if in the umpire's judgment circumstances justify.

9.00—The Umpire.

9.01

- (a) The league president shall appoint one or more umpires to officiate at each league championship game. The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.
- (b) Each umpire is the representative of the league and of professional baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager or club officer or employee to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of these rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.
- (c) Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.
- (d) Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.
- (e) Each umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit his presence on the field, such as ground crew members, ushers, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc., and (2) any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.

9.02

- (a) Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.

Rule 9.02(a) Comment: Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue on BALLS AND STRIKES will not be permitted. They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the game.

- (b) If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.
- (c) If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it. If the umpires consult after a play and change a call that had been made, then they have the authority to take all steps that they may deem necessary, in their discretion, to eliminate the results and consequences of the earlier call that they are reversing, including placing runners where they think those runners would have been after the play, had the ultimate call been made as the initial call, disregarding interference or obstruction that may have occurred on the play; failures of runners to tag up based upon the initial call on the field; runners passing other runners or missing bases; etc., all in the discretion of the umpires.

No player, manager or coach shall be permitted to argue the exercise of the umpires' discretion in resolving the play and any person so arguing shall be subject to ejection.

Rule 9.02(c) Comment: A manager is permitted to ask the umpires for an explanation of the play and how the umpires have exercised their discretion to eliminate the results and consequences of the earlier call that the umpires are reversing. Once the umpires explain the result of the play, however, no one is permitted to argue that the umpires should have exercised their discretion in a different manner.

The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help. Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond. Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing.

Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail. Appeals on a half swing must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the half swing occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before all infielders of the defensive team leave fair territory.

Baserunners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire.

The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing.

On a half swing, if the manager comes out to argue with first or third base umpire and if after being warned he persists in arguing, he can be ejected as he is now arguing over a called ball or strike.

(d) No umpire may be replaced during a game unless he is injured or becomes ill.

9.03

- (a) If there is only one umpire, he shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. He may take any position on the playing field which will enable him to discharge his duties (usually behind the catcher, but sometimes behind the pitcher if there are runners). He shall be considered umpire-in-chief.
- (b) If there are two or more umpires, one shall be designated umpire-in-chief and the others field umpires.

9.04

- (a) The umpire-in-chief shall stand behind the catcher. (He usually is called the plate umpire.) His duties shall be to:
 1. Take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
 2. Call and count balls and strike;
 3. Call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by field umpires;
 4. Make all decisions on the batter;
 5. Make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the field umpires;
 6. Decide when a game shall be forfeited;
 7. If a time limit has been set, announce the fact and the time set before the game starts;
 8. Inform the official scorer of the official batting order, and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request;
 9. Announce any special ground rules, at his discretion.
- (b) A field umpire may take any position on the playing field he thinks best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. His duties shall be to:
 1. Make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the umpire-in-chief;
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 3. Take concurrent jurisdiction with the umpire-in-chief in calling "Time," balks, illegal pitches, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player.
 4. Aid the umpire-in-chief in every manner in enforcing the rules, and excepting the power to forfeit the game, shall have equal authority with the umpire-in-chief in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.
- (c) If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the umpire-Umpire-in-chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the umpire-in-chief (unless another umpire may have been designated by the league president) shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.

9.05

- (a) The umpire shall report to the league president within twelve hours after the end of a game all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any trainer, manager, coach or player, and the reasons therefor.
- (b) When any trainer, manager, coach or player is disqualified for a flagrant offense such as the use of obscene or indecent language, or an assault upon an umpire, trainer, manager, coach or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the league president within four hours after the end of the game.
- (c) After receiving the umpire's report that a trainer, manager, coach or player has been disqualified, the league president shall impose such penalty as he deems justified, and shall notify the person penalized and the manager of the club of which the penalized person is a member. If the penalty includes a fine, the penalized person shall pay the amount of the fine to the league within five days after receiving notice of the fine. Failure to pay such fine within five days shall result in the offender being debarred from participation in any game and from sitting on the players' bench during any game, until the fine is paid.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO UMPIRES

Umpires, on the field, should not indulge in conversation with players. Keep out of the coaching box and do not talk to the coach on duty.

Rule 9.05

Keep your uniform in good condition. Be active and alert on the field.

Be courteous, always, to club officials; avoid visiting in club offices and thoughtless familiarity with officers or employees of contesting clubs.

When you enter a ball park your sole duty is to umpire a ball game as the representative of baseball.

Do not allow criticism to keep you from studying out bad situations that may lead to protested games.

Carry your rule book. It is better to consult the rules and hold up the game ten minutes to decide a knotty problem than to have a game thrown out on protest and replayed.

Keep the game moving. A ball game is often helped by energetic and earnest work of the umpires.

You are the only official representative of baseball on the ball field. It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper and self-control.

You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "even up" after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them and forget which is the home or visiting club.

Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a double play. Watch out for dropped balls after you have called a man out.

Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting "out" or "safe." Wait until the play is completed before making any arm motion.

Each umpire team should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error. If sure you got the play correctly, do not be stampeded by players' appeals to "ask the other man." If not sure, ask one of your associates. Do not carry this to extremes, be alert and get your own plays. But remember! The first requisite is to get decisions correctly. If in doubt don't hesitate to consult your associate. Umpire dignity is important but never as important as "being right."

Most important rule for umpires is always "BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY." Even though your decision may be 100% right, players still question it if they feel you were not in a spot to see the play clearly and definitely.

Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm, and so compel respect from all.

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Fielders other than pitchers 3.03 (Comment);
Pitchers 8.03.
Weather and Playing Conditions—3.10, 3.11, 4.01(e), 4.01(e) Comment, 4.12(a)(5),
4.12 Comment, 4.13(d), 5.10(a), 6.02(b) Comment, 8.02(a)(1);
Weather takes precedence 4.12(a) Note.
Windup Position—8.01(a)

