

TCL Umpire Guidelines

Umpire Game Prep

1. Be there about 15 minutes early.
2. Find your vest, and make sure it has a clicker.
3. Locate the score sheet and make sure the scoreboard operator is ready.
4. Unwrap a new softball. Make sure there are a couple good used softballs available for when a ball is hit out of play.
5. Meet with both managers and make sure they have a full team to play.
6. Also confer with the other umpire about calling the baselines, infield fly rule and watching for tag ups, etc.
7. Try to start on time, and keep the game moving!

Home Plate Umpire Mechanics

1. Stand opposite the batter for best angle of calling the pitch and seeing both foul lines.
2. Verbalize strikes and raise right hand. No need to call balls. It is a strike if it hits the plate, and was at least 6 feet high, but less than 12 feet high (be consistent).
3. A batter may not have a foot completely outside the batter's box when he strikes the ball, or he will be called out.
4. Home plate umpire calls foul balls: Verbalize only foul balls, and point. Only point if it's fair. On fly balls, it is where the ball is when touched (fair or foul territory).
5. Home plate umpire makes calls at 3rd base as well as home. Get up the line for a call at 3B (get a good angle).
6. Stand on first base line for calls at home for a good angle (force outs).
7. A runner is safe at home only when his foot touches down on the scoring line or past the line.
8. Don't allow "quick pitch" where batter isn't ready. Call "no pitch".
9. Keep track of balls, strikes and outs with the clicker. Try to remind batter of count.
10. Verbalize an Infield Fly at it's highest point if possible (either umpire). An infield fly occurs with men on first and second or bases loaded, and less than two outs. It is a judgment call whether it can be caught by an infielder, catcher or pitcher with reasonable effort. Failure to call an infield fly does not change the fact that it is an infield fly (the call can be retroactively corrected). Runners can advance at their own risk.
11. On fly balls to outfield, home plate umpire watches for players leaving the base early on tag ups. Base ump watches for whether the ball is caught or not.
12. Write down runs scored every half inning on score sheet.

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Field Umpire Mechanics

1. Responsible for 1B and 2B.
2. Position yourself behind 1B with no one on 1B.
3. Position yourself between 1B and 2B when a runner is on 1B. Avoid blocking outfielders' view.
4. Make sure runner touches bases (exception: if the bases are wet, umpires may allow a runner to touch in the "vicinity" of the base).
5. Responsible to call catches (outs) in outfield (e.g. trapped balls).
6. If umpire is hit by a batted ball, it is live unless he is in front of infielder (in which case it is a dead ball single).
7. Runner can be called safe if he moves out of the way to avoid a collision, and the umpire deems he would have been safe.
8. A runner that reaches first safely and runs past it is allowed to turn either way to return to first. However, if any attempt is made to run toward second base, he can be tagged out on the way back to first.

Both Umpires

1. Appeal plays: a manager may request that the umpire who made a close call confer with the other umpire. The umpire is not required to ask the other umpire for help; it is at his discretion to ask for help.
2. Call time out once the play is over (make sure runners aren't advancing, and ball is in).
3. Overthrows into dugout or out of play: if a runner has past a base, he is entitled to the next base and one more. Example: an player has rounded 2B, and is on his way back to 2B, he gets 3B and home (provided he is not standing on 2B when the ball goes out of play).
4. Safety rule: allow a runner on 1B or 3B to step away from the bag in order to stay clear of a possible pulled ball down the line. The runner must return to the bag after the ball is hit in order to advance. (He cannot be tagged out on his way back to the bag).
5. SELL the call if it is close: be loud and make safe/out sign demonstrably.
6. ALWAYS keep your eye on the ball until the play is dead and time is out.
7. CONFER with other ump as necessary, e.g. on rule interpretation.
8. USE common sense when there's a gray area. If you weren't watching a tag up, call "safe".
9. TRY to keep it light. Remind each other this is a Community Recreational League.