

OCEAN VIEW LITTLE LEAGUE UMPIRE QUICK REFERENCE

(For complete rules and details, please refer to Little League Official Rule Book and Local Rules

PRIORITIES: Fair/Foul
Catch/No Catch
Out/Safe
Ball/Strike

UMPIRE MEETING: Discuss responsibilities for catch/no catch, fair/foul and who is responsible for calls on each base. Discuss umpire communication signals for Infield Fly Rule, coverage of bases, Timing Play, etc.

CHECK BATS AND HELMETS: For each team, look for cracks in helmets, illegal or big barrel bats,...

BASE UMPIRE: Pause/Watch/React. Priority is the lead runner.
Wait for the complete play, then make the call.

TWO-UMP MECHANICS	
<u>RUNNERS</u>	<u>YOUR POSITION</u>
None	A
1B	B
All Else	C

(In this space, I put a diagram of a baseball diamond with the 3 positions where a base umpire stands, depending on the situation of base runners – please see position “A”, “B” and “C” above and below.)

- A: Stand in foul area, 10-12 ft behind 1st base
- B: Behind second baseman area
- C: Behind shortstop area.

MOVEMENT FROM POSITION A

(Umpire angle on the play is more important
Then the distance to play. Try for 90
degree angle on the play.)

- Ball hit to 3rd, take 4 steps to the right
- Ball hit to Short, take 3 steps to the right
- Ball hit to 2nd, take 1 step to the right
- Ball hit to 1st, go to base coach area

STRIKE ZONE (Rule 2): Officially, from the armpit to top of knees and the width of the plate. Any part of the ball in that zone is a strike. For lower divisions, expand the strike zone so the batter swings at the ball, instead of waiting for a walk. The key is to stay consistent on your strike zone throughout the game.

FAIR/FOUL (Rule 2): For an infield foul, ball must be touched by a player, an object in foul territory or stop in the foul area between home and first or home and third. An outfield foul fly can start in fair territory (with out contacting the ground), then be touched by a player or the ground in foul territory. Umpires call “FOUL” and point to foul territory on all fouls, but do not say anything on fair balls, while pointing to fair territory.

FOUL TIP (Rule 2): A sharp and direct (no arc) hit ball that is caught by the catcher. The play is live and base runners can advance. If caught after 2 strikes, the batter is out.

WARMING UP PITCHERS: Only team players (not adults) can warm up pitchers, and must be equipped with a catcher's mit, mask, helmet and dangler.

DUGOUT: Must be one adult in dugout at all time. No on-deck batters practicing in front of the dugout. No batboys that are not on the team allowed.

APPEALS (Rule 2):

1. Failure to retouch properly
2. Missed base
3. Failure to return to 1st base
4. Failure to touch home base
5. Batting out of order

Appeals must be made by a player (Manager can verbally assist the player), must be made without time-out, must be made before the defense leaves the field, and before the next pitch or play is made (so live ball).

BATTING OUT OF ORDER (Rule 6.07): If the improper batter (batter out of order) completes his turn at bat, and an appeal is made, the proper batter is out. If the improper batter is still batting, the proper batter takes his place and assumes the ball and strike count without an out.

BUNT (Rule 2): Ok to be in the bunt position – only a strike if the batter tries to contact the ball. Only an issue if the pitch is out of the strike zone (otherwise it's a standard strike). Bunt foul with 2 strikes is a strike-out.

INFIELD FLY RULE (Rule 2): (This rule is to prevent “cheap” double plays). Must be less than 2 outs (0 or 1 out), runners on 1st and 2nd or bases loaded. When umpires see this situation, they communicate by tapping on their hat to make sure both umpires know a potential Infield Fly Rule can happen. The hit must be a fly ball (no line-drives) and the defender must be comfortably settled under the ball (no running/diving catches – couple steps to catch the ball is ok). When the ball is at its top peak, the umpire yells “infield fly if fair”.

- Batter is always out, even if the defender misses the catch.
- Runners can advance to another base at their own risk (must tag-up if the ball is caught).

AWARDING EXTRA BASES (Rule 7): Batter running to first, and defender immediately throws the ball out of play (example: thrown into the dugout) then award the batter 2nd base (2 bases from the pitch). A runner advances 2 bases if a thrown ball goes out of play. The ball is called dead.

INTERFERENCE (Rule 2): Runner is out if struck by a batted ball and interferes a fielder from making a play (must allow the defensive fielder to make a play on a batted ball). Base coach cannot push, stop, touch a runner – if it happens, runner is out. In interference situation 3 things happen: A runner is out, the other runners return to the base they had before the interference and the ball is called dead.

PROTEST (Rule 4): Only based on a violation or interpretation of a baseball rule. Only the manager can protest a play. Must be done before the next play. Cannot protest an umpire's “judgment” call (example: strike/ball, fair/foul). Once a protest is made, meet with the other umpire, discuss and either reverse the decision or communicate to the scorekeeper to mark the play when the protest was made and resume play “under protest”. The manager needs to report the protest in writing to the league President within 24 hours. Umpire must do a report too.

INJURED OR PLAYER LEAVES GAME (Rule 4.04): If a player is injured, becomes sick or must leave the game site, no outs occur. Collapse the batting order and continue play.

GROUND RULE DOUBLE: If a batted ball bounces in the outfield, then goes over the home run fence, then the batter is awarded a double. Same award if the batted ball goes thru or under the home run fence.

BATTER HIT BY PITCHED BALL (Rule 6): Always call dead ball. If the pitch hits a batter outside the strike zone, batter is awarded first base. If hit by a ball in the strike zone, call strike. If on the 3rd strike, the batter swings and misses, but gets hit by a pitch outside the strike zone, batter is out. The hands are not part of the bat. The batter shall attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch.

BATTERS BOX (Rule 6): Batter must be entirely in the batters box once the pitcher is set or starts the pitch, otherwise a forced strike. Batter cannot call time-out once the pitcher is “set” for a pitch. Batter is out if makes contact with the ball with a foot entirely out of the box while that foot is touching the ground.

- During a catchers throw to “pick-off” a runner, the batter can remain in the box.
- During a steel to home, the batter should vacate the box if he/she knows the runner is coming into home.

OBSTRUCTION (Rule 7): Fielder must allow a runner a clear path to touch the base, unobstructed, if the fielder at the base does not have the ball. A runner should have a “clear pathway” thru first base. If a fielder has a foot or any part of his/her body in front of the base, with out the ball, and requires the runner to slow down or collide, the umpire shall call “obstruction” and let the play continue. After the play, you award one base beyond what is achieved. If the runner is slowed down by obstruction, and could have reached another base if he/she was not slowed down (obstructed) then allow the runner the next base (judgment call). This is not appealable. If the runner is obstructed while the defender is making a play on the runner (Example: just prior to receiving the ball), call dead ball and award the runner the base.

- NOTE: If the defender making the play on the runner has the ball, there is no obstruction.

BASE LINE (Rule 7): The runner can run at any path or arc he/she chooses, unless the defender has the ball and is ready to make a play on the runner – in which case, the runner must run straight to either base with an established 3 foot base line.

- A runner has to attempt to avoid a collision with a defender who has the ball ready to make a play or tag. There is not a “must slide” rule – it’s “attempt to avoid”.

RUNNERS ARE ASSUMED TO THE BASE (Rule 7): While running, the umpire makes notice if a runner misses a base. Keep the play going and do not say anything. This is an opportunity for an appeal. If an appeal is made, the player can be called out if defense takes the ball to the missed base or tags the runner out.

HEAD FIRST SLIDES (Rule 7): Runner is called out. The runner is only allowed headfirst slides if returning back to a base (Example: pick-off play).

TWO RUNNERS ON THE BASE (Rule 7): If a play is made on the two runners, the original runner is allowed safe and the second player to the base is out, unless it’s a force play which forces the base runner to advance.

STEELING EARLY (Rule 7): The runner cannot leave the base until the pitched ball is hit-able (usually over the plate). If a runner leaves early, then the umpire throws his towel or hat down and lets play continues. If the runner steeling is thrown out, then the out remains. If there was no hit ball or forced walk, then the runner steeling must go back to the original base without penalty. If the runner steeling leaves early and the batter hits safely, forcing the runner to another base, then no penalty on the early steeling runner, play continues.

- Runners must be on the base when the pitcher is ready to pitch.