

# 2018 Level III - Umpire Study Guide



# Level III Study Guide Info

- The guide is broken into subjects which are covered on the 2018 Level III Umpire Exam
- All rule references refer to the new rules and numbering
- When watching videos, announcers may not be correct and rules may be different from the league in the video, your province or Baseball Canada

## REFERENCES

- [Official Rules of Baseball](#)
- [Baseball Canada Rules](#)
- [2 Umpire – Positioning Guide](#)
- [Baseball Canada Interpretations](#)



# Catcher's Interference

VIDEO 1

VIDEO 2



## PENALTY

- Award BR first base
- Award runners who are stealing next base
- Other runners only advance if forced

## Video Review

- In the first video, we see the plate umpire calling interference. Because not everybody advanced one base, they enforce the penalty. Award BR first and because bases were loaded, all runners are forced.
- In the second video, watch the plate umpire signal interference. The BR is out at first. When the play is complete, the umpire calls time and the penalty is enforced. Because there were R2 and R3, the plate umpire awards BR first and sends the runners back to their original bases. Ultimately, the coach request the result of the play and after a conference, the umpires allow him that option.

# Runner hit by fair batted ball

- If a **runner standing** on third **base** in fair territory is struck by a batted **ball**, also in fair territory, he is out.
- The **base** provides no protection, unless the batted **ball** is declared an Infield Fly by the umpire. In that case, the **runner** is not out; the batter is out by virtue of the Infield Fly Rule.

## 6.01 (a)(11)

A runner is out when...

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.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH  
MLB UMPIRE TED BARRETT  
EXPLAIN THIS RULE](#)



# Runner Pushed Off Base

## 5.06(a)(1) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

If in the judgment of an umpire, a runner is pushed or forced off a base by a fielder, intentionally or unintentionally, at which the runner would have otherwise been called safe, the umpire has the authority and discretion under the circumstances to return the runner to the base he was forced off following the conclusion of the play.

VIDEO

### Video Review

- This was a controversial play from the 1991 World Series.
- After a base hit, the ball is thrown behind the runner at first. The runner gets back safely, but after get entangled with the first baseman, comes off the bag and is tagged.
- Read the rule to the left and watch the video. What would you do?



# Backswing Interference

VIDEO

## 6.03(a)(3) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

- Batter strikes at a ball and misses
- In the Umpire's judgment, the batter unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball in back of the batter on the follow-through or backswing while the batter is still in the batter's box,
- It shall be called a strike only (no interference).
- The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.
- If the catcher's initial throw directly retires a runner despite the infraction, the play stands the same as if no violation had occurred.
- If this infraction should occur in a situation where the batter would normally become a runner because of a third strike not caught, the ball shall be dead and the batter declared out.

## Video Review

- The runner from first is stealing on the play.
- The batter swings and misses and on the backswing interferes with the catcher.
- Note that the interference doesn't have to be major, it just needs to interfere with the catcher's throw in an attempt to retire the runner.
- In this case, the catcher's throw didn't retire the runner, so the rule was enforced.
- Look how strongly the umpire makes the call and returns the runner back to first.



# Deflected Pitched Ball

5.06(b)(4)(H)

SITUATION	PENALTY
PITCHED BALL GOES <u>DIRECTLY</u> OUT OF PLAY <b>OR</b> DEFLECTS AND GOES DIRECTLY OUT OF PLAY	One base from time of pitch
PITCHED BALL GOES BY OR THROUGH A FIELDER AND REMAINS ON THE FIELD. THEN THE BALL IS DEFLECTED/KICKED UNINTENTIONALLY AND GOES <u>DIRECTLY</u> OUT OF PLAY	Two bases from time of pitch
PITCHED BALL IS INTENTIONALLY KICKED OR DEFLECTED OUT OF PLAY	Two bases from time ball goes out of play

**Note: It no longer matters whether the ball was going out of play without the added momentum.**

**See Baseball Canada rule book for other deflected ball examples.**



# Scoring runs

## 5.08 & Baseball Canada Interpretation

There are three fundamentals to keep in mind when deciding how many runs score on a play:

- (1) No run shall score during a play in which the third out is made by the batter-runner before the batter-runner touches first base.
- (2) No run shall score during a play in which the third out is a force out.
- (3) Following runners are not affected by an act of a preceding runner unless two are out.

### SITUATION 1

Bases are loaded and there are two outs. The batter hits a ground ball single to right field. R3 and R2 both score and R1 ends up at third. The defense properly appeals that R2 missed third.

*In this situation, no runs score because the third out is a force out.*

### SITUATION 2

There are runners on second and third and one out. The batter hits a home run out of the park. In his excitement, he misses first base. The defense properly appeals at first.

*In this situation, two runs score. Because there are less than two outs, R2 and R3 are not impacted by the actions of their teammate. If there were two outs, no runs would score.*



# Ball, balk or nothing?

## 6.02(k) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

It is a balk if the pitcher, while touching the pitching rubber, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball or if the ball slips or falls out of his hand or glove.

However, a pitched ball that is errantly thrown crosses the foul line, it shall be called a ball. If it doesn't cross the foul line, with runners on base it is a balk, with no runners it is no pitch.

VIDEO

### Video Review

- It happens – even in MLB! Because the ball went across the foul line, it was called a ball – even though it was nowhere near the plate!

### **DROPPED BALL ≠ PITCHED BALL**

If the pitcher drops the ball, or if it slips from his/her hand while touching the rubber, it is always a balk, regardless if it crosses the foul line.

If there is no one on base, this is no pitch.



# Spectator Interference

VIDEO 1

VIDEO 2

If spectator touches a live ball on or above live ball territory.



Signal spectator interference and call "Time" immediately



Enforce penalties and place runners (including BR), which in umpires' judgement, would nullify act of interference.

## Video Review

- In the first video, in the review, the fan clearly leans over the wall and interferes. After the review, the umpire makes the signal for spectator interference (right hand grabbing left wrist above his head) and awards the BR second base to nullify the effects of the interference.
- In the second video, the fan reaches over the wall and over the field of play, impedes the fielder from catching the ball. To nullify the effects of the interference, the umpires call the BR out. There were two outs on this play, but if there had been 0 or 1 out, the umpires likely would have scored R3 to nullify the effects of the interference.

# Umpire Interference

## Rule 6.01(f) Comment

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 attempted steal); or

(2) when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder. Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

## Penalty

(1) If the runner is thrown out by the catcher, there is no reference to the interference. If the runner is not out, all runners return to their base at the time of pitch.

(2) The ball is dead as soon as the interference occurs. The BR is awarded first and other runners advance if forced.

VIDEO

## Video Review

- Watch this series of clips of umpires getting hit by batted balls. Which ones are umpire interference and which ones should the play continue?



# Runner's Lane

VIDEO 1

VIDEO 2

## **RULE 5.09(a)(11)**

*A runner's lane violation and a batter is out when...*

- In running the last half of the distance from home base to first base and
- The ball is being fielded to first base, and
- The runner runs outside the three-foot lane (either in fair or foul territory) and
- In the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base

## **EXCEPTION**

The runner may run outside the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. The lines marking the three-foot lane are considered to be within the lane.

## **PENALTY**

BR is declared out and all runner's return to their last legally occupied base.

## Video Review

- The first video is a classic runner's lane violation. The batter-runner is hit by a good throw while outside of the runner's lane. Watch the umpire hustle on the play – even the announcer compliments him.
- In the second video, the throw does not hit the batter-runner, but he has still committed a violation by running out of the lane and thus interfering with the ability to make a good throw or the fielder being able to take the throw at first. The BR is out and all runners are sent back to their original base.



# Foul Tip

## Definition

A foul tip is a batted ball that goes sharply and directly to the catcher's hand or glove and is legally caught. A foul tip is considered equivalent to a ball in which the batter swings and misses, in that the baserunners are able to advance at their own risk (without needing to tag up). Should the batter produce a foul tip after previously accruing two strikes, the foul tip is considered strike three and the batter is out.

VIDEO

## Video Review

- The batter tipped the ball, which first hit the catcher's hand, so despite it being unusual, this is a caught foul tip and a strikeout!



# Infield Fly

## Requirements for Infield Fly

- A fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt)
- Can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort,
- Runners on first and second or first second or third
- Less than 2 outs

## Making the Call

- When determined to be an infield fly, any umpire points up and calls “Infield Fly, batter is out!”
- If the ball is near a foul line, umpire (usually the plate umpire) points up and calls “Infield Fly, if fair!”

## Other Notes

- It doesn't matter where the ball is hit, only that an infielder can catch it with “ordinary effort.”
- For the purposes of this rule, all fielders stationed within the infield (including the catcher) are considered an infielder
- Either umpire can initiate an Infield Fly call

VIDEO

## Video Review

- This was a controversial call in the 2012 National League Wild Card Game
- Do you think this should have been called an Infield Fly?

## What is “Ordinary Effort?”

The term "ordinary effort" considers all circumstances, including weather, lighting, positioning of the defense, and the abilities of the players involved in the play. Often we ask whether a fielder can “camp” under the ball. If so, we consider it “Ordinary Effort.” A ball where the fielder has his back to the infield or has to leave his feet to catch, is typically not “Ordinary Effort.”



# Ball Lodged in Glove

## Definition of Tag (of a base or runner)

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 (not including hanging laces alone), 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.

## Interpretation

If the ball lodges in the webbing of a fielder's glove and he throws the entire glove to another fielder, it shall be considered a tag if the second fielder has secure possession of the glove and the ball is still lodged.

NOTE: This is not considered detached equipment!

VIDEO

## Video Review

- Watch this montage of clips. Pitchers have been throwing their entire glove to the first baseman for a long time. In each case the first baseman has secure possession so the BR is called out.
- Bonus: in the last clip, the first baseman throws his entire glove to the pitcher who is covering. Same rules apply!



# Runner Stealing on Ball Four

## **Rule 5.09(b)(4) & Baseball Canada Interpretation**

Play: With a runner on first, with a 3-1 count on the batter, the runner attempts to steal second on the pitch, and the umpire calls the runner out. Ball four was called on the pitch. The runner, because of being called out, is now off the base is tagged again.

Ruling: Because the runner was entitled to second base on ball four, and is called out in error, the umpire shall call time, and place the runner back at second.



# Intentionally Dropped Ball

## Rule 5.09(a)(12) and Baseball Canada Interpretation

The batter is out, the ball is dead, and runner(s) return to their original base(s) when an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive with runners on first, first and second, first and third, or bases loaded (with less than two out).

*Note that the batter is not declared out in this situation if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground except when the Infield Fly rule applies.*

The same application shall be made if an outfielder has come so close to the infield to set up a double play situation if he intentionally drops the ball. Runners cannot advance under this rule.

Umpires shall immediately call “Time,” when, in their judgment, the ball is intentionally dropped.

**This rule is in place to prevent the defence from intentionally dropping the ball to get an easy double play!**

**This rule doesn't apply when an Infield Fly rule is called – that makes sense as the possibility of a double play has been removed!**

VIDEO 1

VIDEO 2

## Video Review

- In the first video, the pitcher allows the ball to fall to the ground untouched and gets the double play. Because he didn't touch the ball before it hit the ground, this is legal. IF he had touched it first and let it drop, it would be illegal.
- The second video is a collection of clips. Which plays are legal and which are illegal. Watch the umpires to see what they do.



# Start from Scratch

## 5.04(b)(2) comment

- 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.”

VIDEO

### Video Review

- In this play, the batter starts backing out of the box, causing the pitcher to not deliver the ball.
- Initially, the umpire looks like he is initially going to call a balk, but then waves it off.
- The crew gets together and gets the call right.



# Making Contact Out of the Box

## 6.03(a)(1) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

- If a batter hits a ball (fair, foul, or foul tip) with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box, the batter shall be declared out. No runners are allowed to advance.

**If any part of a batter's foot is on the line, the batter is considered to be in the box.**

**Home Plate is not relevant to the discussion. A player can have his foot on the line and be touching home plate.**

**If a player's foot is in the air when making contact with the ball, it is not considered out of the box.**

VIDEO

### Video Review

- This is a tough call. Do you think the player was out of the box?



# Balk followed by Hit Ball

## 6.02(a) and Baseball Canada Interpretation

The penalty for balk allows the play to proceed without reference to the balk if the batter and all runners advance one base on the pitch following the balk (on the pitch or by the batter hitting the ball).

The umpire should call and signal “Balk” when it happens, but not call time until play stops following the balk then follow the flow chart.

### Situation 1

R1. 1 out. The pitcher balks and delivers the ball. The batter raps a hit to right. R1 is thrown out at third.

*The play stands and R1 is out because he advanced more than one base and the BR reached first.*

### Situation 2

R1. One out. R1 is stealing. The pitcher balks and delivers the ball. The batter hits a sharp one-hopper to right. The right-fielder throws the BR out at first and R1 ends up at third.

*The balk penalty is enforced because the BR did not reach first safely. R1 is awarded second and the BR comes back to bat with the same count.*

**There is NEVER an option play in these scenarios!**

A balk is called and signaled. Time is called once play is complete.

Did all runners, including the batter-runner advance at least one base?

NO

YES

Enforce the balk. All runners advance one base from their starting point. Batter returns to bat with the same count.

Play stands. Ignore the balk.

# Two Runners on a Base

## 5.06(a)(2) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

If two runners are touching a base at the same time, the following runner is out when tagged (unless, of course, the lead runner is forced). It is suggested that the umpire clearly indicate by pointing which runner has been declared out in such situations.

**Take your time on these calls, the specific situation will determine which runner has the right to the bag. Sometimes the order the runners are tagged makes a difference as well.**

**CLICK HERE TO WATCH  
MLB UMPIRE TED  
BARRETT EXPLAIN AND  
DEMONSTRATE THE  
MECHANIC FOR THIS RULE**



# Runner Interference

## 5.06(a)(1) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

If in the judgment of an umpire, a runner is pushed or forced off a base by a fielder, intentionally or unintentionally, at which the runner would have otherwise been called safe, the umpire has the authority and discretion under the circumstances to return the runner to the base he was forced off following the conclusion of the play.

VIDEO

### Video Review

- This was a controversial play from the 1991 World Series.
- After a base hit, the ball is thrown behind the runner at first. The runner gets back safely, but after get entangled with the first baseman, comes off the bag and is tagged.
- Read the rule to the left and watch the video. What would you do?



# Set vs. Windup

## 5.07(a)(2) & Baseball Canada Interpretation

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

VIDEO

### Video Review

- This movement is becoming more common each year.
- Assume that there is a runner at 3rd.
- Read the rule to the left and watch the video.

