

General Responsibilities for Plate Umpire.

- **Routine fly balls-** Go towards the ball, no farther than a straight line from first to third.
- **Tough catches or fair foul decisions-** Get as much distance as possible but be set for the play. On a catch/no catch decision, get an angle. If the fielder is coming straight towards you, you might not see the ball hit the ground.
- **Running to 45-foot line-** Break to the left of the catcher then straddle the line while running down.
 - Don't go past 45-foot line.
 - Be stopped before the play at first occurs.
 - If it is a fair/foul decision down 3rd base line, make call then cut across to first base line if you can.
 - Watch for: interference, pulled foot, swipe tag. For pulled foot or swipe tag, the call always belongs to the base umpire initially. Don't help him unless he asks for it.
 - In the event of an overthrow at first, break off the line and watch for the ball going out of play.
- **Taking runner when base guy goes out-** Circle mound so you can stay ahead of the runner. Watch him touch bases. When you read that a play is going to occur at a base, try to get into the cutout and get set for the play. You have the runner all the way unless your base guy comes back to get the plate. He must communicate that he has it before you release the runner.
- **Rotations:**
 - **1st to 3rd-r1 only and r1/r3-** Same in both instances except with r1 and r3, glance over right shoulder at touch of plate. Move up the third base line, 3 feet foul (edge of grass line). Stop about 2/3 of the way up the line and wait to see if there is going to be a play. (A play means the ball and the runner are arriving at the base. One without the other is not a play.) Say, "I've got third if he comes." Get into cut if there is going to be a play, and say, "I've got third." If you go in and the ball gets away, come back in fair territory to cover the plate. If there is a play, after it is over, get into foul territory and get back to the plate. If there is not going to be a play, say, "I'm going home."
 - **R1 and R2, less than 2 out, Fly ball to outfield-** "I've got third if he tags." Then, "I've got third." Or "I'm going home."
- **1st to Third Rotation Situation: fly ball down the right field line-** say, "I'm on the line." This indicates that you are not rotating.

Double Play- Get into fair territory on the third base side of the infield. Watch for interference at second. Also, be ready to rotate to third in case of R1 advancing past second.

No responsibility to rotate- Drop back from point of plate and observe the action

Lining up tags- Get the best angle possible where you can see the catch, glance at the runner leaving, and be in position for the play at the plate.

Plays at Plate- Start at the point of the plate, then read the play. If swipe tag is likely, get to third base line extended. If no swipe tag is probable, slide to the left.

Timing plays- Line up plate and base at which play is occurring. "No run, no run," or "That run scores, that run scores."

Clearing the bat- Hold at barrel and slide across the ground. Keep your eyes on the field. **Passed balls to fence-** Take off mask while opening to the ball. Whichever side of you the ball went past, drop that foot back to open up. Don't forget to call the pitch (especially if it was a strike). On a checked swing with two strikes, go immediately for help to avoid problems.

Getting balls from on deck-- Never hold up the game to get baseballs. If an on-deck hitter retrieves a ball, tell him to hang on to it. Wait for a break in the action. Also, never run out of baseballs. Plan ahead.

Requesting balls- Hold up the number of balls you want and say, "Bobby, I need 4 baseballs."

Checking baseballs

- **when-** anytime the ball hits the ground hard (e.g., foul ball, pitch in the dirt, etc.), and anytime the ball hits off the end of the bat or hits a fence. Also, check balls when you get them back from the ball boy.
- **how-** Just switch the ball for a new one and check the old one before you put it away. It saves time.
- **what to look for-** cuts, scrapes, dents, flat spots, and very obvious marks or smudges. (The number of baseballs you have at your disposal will determine how picky you can be.)