

PRE-GAME CHECKLIST

Softball

It is strongly recommended that you get together with your partner not less than 30 minutes before each game to discuss these items. Meeting 1 hour before game time is ideal if possible.

Signals and Verbal Commands, Eye Contact: Discuss your methods of communication. Discuss the signals you will use for rotation situation, infield fly situation, repeat count and outs, request for meeting between innings. (This is done when it is necessary to fix a communication problem. Umpires should not meet during the game otherwise).

Fair / Foul: Discuss plate umpire responsibilities and base umpire responsibilities with bases empty. (Plate umpire always has when runners are on.)

Foul Balls Off the Batter: The base umpire should assist the plate umpire when this happens. It is commonly taught the base umpire only calls 'dead ball' when he realizes the plate umpire did not see the ball hit the batter. The habit of calling 'dead ball' should be done vs calling 'foul'. In a situation where the batter was hit prior to the ball hitting bat then the batter, you could award first versus keeping the batter in the batter's box. Calling 'foul' in this situation will give a coach cause to argue.

Foul Tip Third Strikes, Catch or No Catch: Discuss how the base umpire can assist the plate umpire in determining whether a foul tip third strike was caught by the catcher.

Checked Swings: When the plate umpire checks with his partner on a checked swing, the base umpire should respond "Yes, she did!" (with a closed fist like an 'out' signal), or "No!" (with a 'safe' signal). A good plate umpire should expect his partner to rule as he sees it and not be concerned if the call is overturned.

Overthrows, Dead Balls, and Base Awards: Plate umpire primarily has overthrows and ruling if ball goes into dead ball territory. Plate umpire makes award, base umpire may echo. With multiple runners, award bases starting with the lead runner then the runner behind him, etc.

Swipe Tags and Pulled Foot Plays at FIRST BASE: Base umpire makes a call. If coach comes out questioning, base umpire can go to partner for help because of possible pulled foot or swipe tag made or missed if base umpires feels he needs assistance on the call.

Interference; 30-Foot Running Lane: This is primarily the plate umpire's responsibility.

Line Drive and Fly Ball Coverage: Discuss plate umpire responsibilities and base umpire responsibilities with bases empty and runners on.

Tag-Ups: Discuss plate umpire and base umpire responsibilities.

Touches: Discuss plate umpire and base umpire responsibilities.

Infield Fly: If near the line, plate umpire should initiate, base umpire echo. IMPORTANT to not call too soon. Wait until the ball reaches its apex before determining. An infielder must be able to catch with 'ordinary effort'. Rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to attempt making the catch.

Illegal Pitches: Discuss responsibilities for calling pitcher's feet and pitcher's hands. IF pitcher throws illegal pitches, we MUST call it!

Arguments and Ejections: Discuss each official's responsibility if one is involved in an argument or if there is an ejection.

Rain Delays, Lightning, and Darkness: Consider the possibility of the game not reaching its natural conclusion due to weather or other factors. Discuss the factors used to determine the stoppage of play.

Rundown coverage: Discuss when the plate umpire will get involved if between 1st & 2nd or 2nd & 3rd and verbal communication that will be used. Plate umpire should let partner know when he is at 1st or 3rd to help. Discuss who makes call when tag, obstruction or interference happens.

NEVER react to fans verbally or with body language. Unruly fans should be controlled by Game Administrator. Confirm at the plate meeting with the home team's head coach as to whom the Game Administrator is, stop the contest and discuss situation with the Administrator. **Read 505 in the Officials Guidebook. HOME SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IS RESPONSIBLE.**

Pre-game responsibilities:

- **Plate umpire should contact his partner 2 days before the game. Base umpire should call if not heard from partner by day before. Contact Assigner or Yetta if partner listed has canceled game.**
- Confirm time each will arrive. One hour before game time is ideal but not always practical due to work, etc.
- Parking. Where you plan to meet.
- Have your partner's cell number.
- Pre-game with partner.
- Arrive on the field together at least 15 minutes before game time to check bats and helmets. **At plate meeting ask Head Coaches if players are properly and legally equipped. Receive a verbal 'yes'.**
 - Batting and Catcher helmets must:**
 - a. Have a permanently affixed NOCSAE stamp, embossed or in sticker form; if missing, **may not** be used.
 - b. Batting helmets SHALL be equipped with a NOCSAE-approved face protector. The phrase, "Meets NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture" must be permanently affixed to the face protector.
 - c. Extended ear flaps which covers both ears and temples.
 - d. NO missing padding.
 - e. NO cracks

LEAVE THE FIELD TOGETHER, preferably out the winning team's side of the field and go directly to your cars; i.e. not stopping to talk to fans, news media, etc.

POST GAME! Once in the parking lot, discuss the good things that happened and things that could have been handled differently in a safe and quiet area. **Discussion of a coach, player or fan should never be done with the possibility of being overheard by others.**