

Field Mechanics

4-Hour Clinic, 24-Student Maximum

Balls and strikes. Safe and out. Fair and foul. That's what umpires do, isn't it? While this is true, there is so much more the umpire is responsible for.

Illegal pitches, catcher's interference, leaving early, tag ups, first touch, base touches, tags, obstruction, batter's interference, foul tips, catch or no catch, runners passing runners, appeals, base awards, runner's interference, infield fly's, intentionally dropped balls, balks, fake tags, missed tags, pick offs, check-swings, coach's interference, head-first slides, steals, balls thrown out of play, retired runner interference, uncaught 3rd strikes, hit by pitch and the list goes on and on, seemingly forever.

We can't possibly teach all of that in a 4-Hour clinic, but ***Proper Field Mechanics*** ensure that each umpire is in the right position to see these things when they happen. If we can't see it, we can't call it and if we see it from the wrong angle, our chances of getting it right are compromised.

This clinic will teach the student umpire where to be, when to be there, how to get there, and how to get there in time to see everything that happens in their area of responsibility.

Instructor staff will teach and demonstrate what each umpire's responsibility is from pre-pitch to the conclusion of the play. Emphasis will be placed on proper starting positions, pivoting into the infield, utilizing the working area, clearing the catcher, trailing the batter-runner and gaining ground. Student umpires will learn who has fair/foul and catch/no catch responsibility, base touches, obstruction, and interference as well as overthrow and rundown coverage. We'll teach how to work double plays and how to nail that close play at 1st base. Positioning for plays at the plate, opening the gate, and sandwiching that pop-up on the 1st base side will be covered as well as other important field mechanics.

The host league will have two options for this clinic.

Option 1: (STRONGLY PREFERRED) Simulated game using major division players (9 defensive positions and at least 4 base runners, preferably 6-8) from their league with a coach hitting balls to create the desired game situations. This method provides the most realistic opportunity for the student umpires to put the field mechanics training they have received into practice. The simulated game will be recorded. We will schedule a Zoom meeting to be held within a week or so of the clinic. During that meeting, we will watch the simulated game and discuss what was done well and what could use a little improvement. This approach has proven itself to be a remarkable learning tool. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a million.

Option 2: While 2 students are acting as the plate and base umpire, the remaining students act as fielders and base runners. This method takes the student's attention away from the instruction being provided and does not allow for a realistic simulation of actual game situations. If possible, we strongly encourage leagues to use Option 1 above.

Host League Responsibilities

General League Resources:

- Ensure all participants pre-register using the provided clinic registration link before the registration deadline. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT as the number of instructors and other resources assigned will depend on how many students will attend.
- Access to male and female restroom facilities for the entire duration of the clinic.
- Cold and room-temperature water for all participants and instructors throughout the clinic.
- At least one member of the host league BOD who is not a student or instructor participating in the clinic shall be onsite for the entire duration of the clinic. This individual should have access to all areas and/or resources that might be needed throughout the clinic. (Concession, equipment, first-aid, fields, batting cages, golf carts, etc.)
- Setup/teardown

League Field Responsibilities and Resources

- One 60' Field: Must be lined per rule 1.04 (Diagram 1). Please ensure your parks department or field staff is familiar with proper lining. Field Must include the following:
 - Batter's Boxes
 - Catcher's Box
 - Foul lines from batter's boxes to foul poles
 - 3-Foot Running lane
 - Base Coaches' Boxes
 - 8' Radius Circle (softball only)
 - 1st and 3rd base must be entirely inside the foul lines
- Safety bag must be a different color than 1st base (if used)

- Safety bag must be entirely in foul territory (if used)
- 15 baseballs/softballs (old/scuffed are fine)
- 1 Fungo bat
- Catcher's mitts (right/left-handed preferred)
- Power to iPad/camera location(s)
- 2 coolers, one in each dugout with bottled water.

District-Provided Resources:

- Clinic registration link
- Sign-in sheet
- 4 Instructors (minimum)
- 10 safety vests for base runners
- 10 safety vests for fielders