






## Things I wish I knew when I started umpiring...

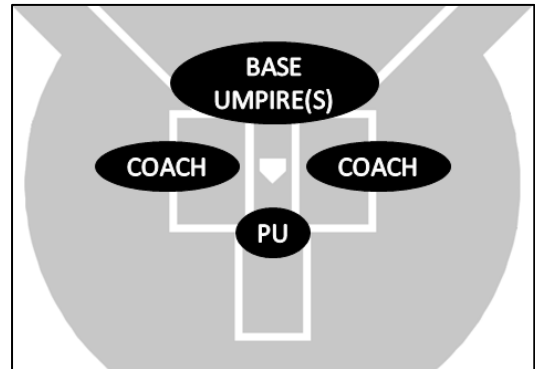
- **Relax, Have Fun, Work Hard.**
- If you want to be treated like an umpire, you must look like an umpire. Very little will discredit you more as an umpire than a sloppy appearance.
  - Your uniform should look clean and unwrinkled for each game. If you do not wash it after each game, at least hang it up. 
  - Shoes should be cleaned before or after each game. Polish as desired.
  - NO ANKLE SOCKS. NO WHITE SOCKS.
  - NEVER wear your cap backwards under your mask. With practice, you can remove your mask without catching your cap.
  - Before your first game of the season, put on your complete uniform and stand in front of a mirror to make sure everything fits. Get in your plate stance to make sure all straps are adjusted properly.

- Do not accept games unless you are sure you can work them. Do not back out of games unless absolutely necessary. 
- Work the lower levels before looking to advance. The experience you gain at the lower levels will pay dividends as you move up the ranks. Most of us moved up too fast and struggle at times because of it. Often the pay is the same regardless of age level. Do not be in a hurry to move up.
- Contact your partner 24 hours before your game. Confirm details such as where to park, uniform shirts colors, etc. 
- Park away from team and fan parking. Find a quiet spot if you will dress at your car and so it's easy to get out after the game.

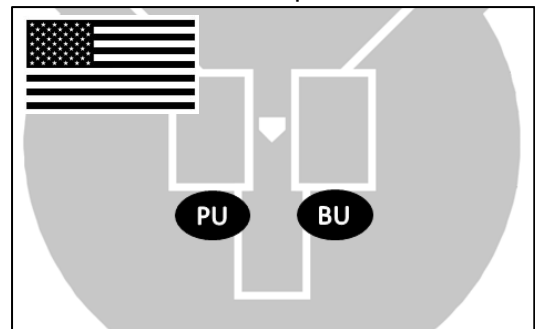



- Always bring all your gear to every game, even if you are scheduled for bases only. Always assume you may have to work the plate.

- Report to the home team coach when you arrive at the ballpark. Confirm any pregame festivities (player introductions, National Anthem, etc.) so you are on the field at the proper time.
- Pregame with your partner before every game. See Pregame document.
- Take the field about 15 minutes before first pitch, or as the last team is finishing infield/outfield. Always take the field with your partner.
- Plate meeting: See Plate Meeting Document.
  - Plate Umpire stands behind home plate.
  - Base Umpires stand in fair territory facing the Plate Umpire.



- National Anthem: Each umpire takes a box.



- Introduce yourself to the catchers at the beginning of the game. Feel free to chat with the catcher but not too much or too often. You each have a job to do and too much chatter can affect your work. 

- Lineup cards: Always ask for lineup cards. Keep track of all lineup changes, courtesy runners, and conferences.
- Mask:
  - Always carry it in your left hand.
  - Always take it off with your left hand so your right hand is free for making calls/signaling.
  - NEVER set it on the ground or leave it unattended. Always in your possession.
  - Trim off or tape loose ends of your mask harness straps.
- Indicator:
  - Always carry it in your left hand. It will take some practice to remove your mask and put it on with your indicator also in your left hand.
  - Try to not look at it every pitch.
- Clean the plate:
  - Before the start of each half inning after the catcher throws to second base.
  - Use your plate brush. You can use your foot to remove some dirt, but always finish with your brush.
  - Your butt should always face the mound. Do not “moon” the fans.
  - Try not to pause an at-bat to clean the plate.
- Between innings:
  - Plate Umpire stands about 20-30 feet up either Base Line.
  - Base Umpire stands in shallow Right Field.
  - No daydreaming. You are still working.
  - Base Umpire must watch for outfielders throwing in warmup balls. Do not get hit.
  - Base umpire should count warmup pitches to help the Plate Umpire who may be dealing with the lineup changes, etc.
  - Take notes of situations between innings. You can look up the rule(s) after the game.
  - Do not visit with your partner between every half inning. A couple times per game is OK.
- Timing – do not rush your calls. SLOW DOWN.
- Angle over Distance. Always choose angle over distance.
- Pause, Read, and React.



- Do not rush to call “Time.” When asked for time, quickly check the rest of the field to ensure all play has stopped before you grant time. 
- Do not point a batter to 1<sup>st</sup> Base on Ball Four. We all know where he’s going. 
- Do not use your hands to signal where the pitch missed. Do it verbally if you like or if asked.
- No Make-up Calls. They make you look incompetent. If you missed one, let it go, do not miss another one with a make-up call, because now you have missed two.
- Do not go looking for trouble, BUT
- Do not let players and/or coaches run you over.
- Be courteous and approachable, but do not be best buddies with players or coaches on the field.
- Someone is **ALWAYS** watching. 
- Leave the field as soon as the game is over. Always leave with your partner. Do not linger waiting to get paid or to socialize. Go get undressed and come back to the field if needed.
- Study the rules. Lots of myths in baseball.
- Put in your time off the field. Much of your development as an umpire takes place at home. 
- As a Spectator, **NEVER CRITICIZE ANOTHER UMPIRE ON THE FIELD.** If you have constructive criticism, approach them after the game away from the field and discuss it. Let’s face it, you do not want them criticizing you while you’re working ether. 
- Share your war stories with other umpires, even your mistakes. It is a valuable tool to learn and develop. We all have stories where we could have done better. Nobody is perfect.
- **Relax, Have Fun, Work Hard.** 

