

# Massachusetts Baseball Umpires Association

## 2-Man Umpire Mechanics Manual

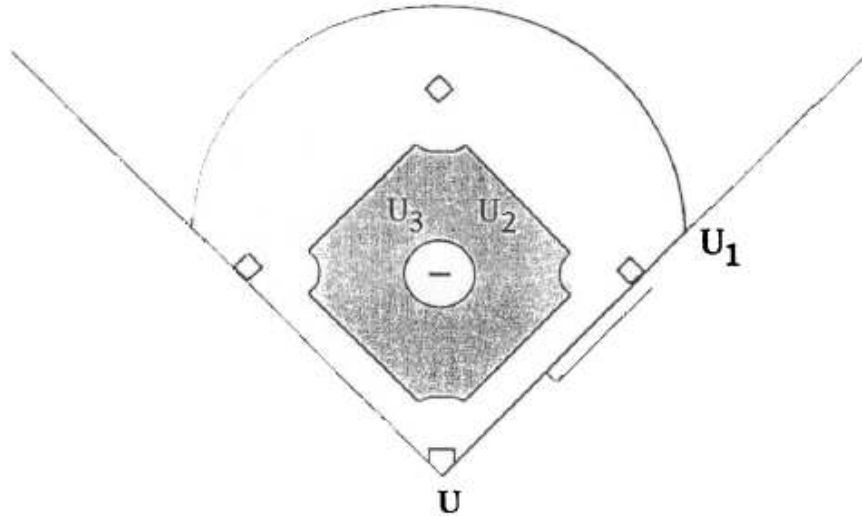


<http://massbua.tripod.com/index.html>



### BASE UMPIRE POSITIONS:

- 1) NO RUNNERS
- 2) ONE MAN ON 1st, 1st AND 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> and 3<sup>RD</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup> and BASES LOADED
- 3) ONE MAN ON 2<sup>ND</sup> or 1ST AND 2<sup>ND</sup>.



### BASE UMPIRE POSITIONS:

- 1) NO RUNNERS

The base umpire should be about 10-15 feet behind the first baseman with both feet in foul territory. If the first baseman is playing at the edge of the outfield grass, 10 feet behind is enough. Allow him to react to the ball without running into you. If the first baseman is playing even with the bag or a little in front of the bag, 15 feet is fine. Let him go first, then you move accordingly.

- 2) ONE MAN ON 1st, 1st AND 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> and 3<sup>RD</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup> and BASES LOADED

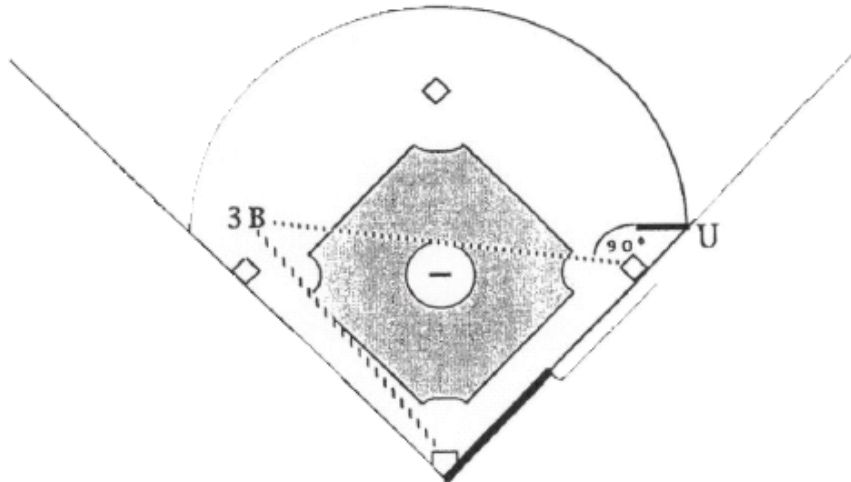
The base umpire moves to the infield, positioning himself on a tangent running from home plate to the edge of the dirt circle around the pitcher's mound, about halfway between the mound and second base. Be square to home plate, with hands on your knees. You are responsible for watching the pitcher for a balk, plus pick-off attempts at all bases, steals, and first plays and possible subsequent plays.

- 3) ONE MAN ON 2<sup>ND</sup> or 1ST AND 2<sup>ND</sup>

Move to the third base side of the mound, halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base, tangent to the dirt circle. You have the same responsibilities as with one man on first plus pickoff plays at all occupied bases.



## BALL TO THIRD



NO RUNNERS

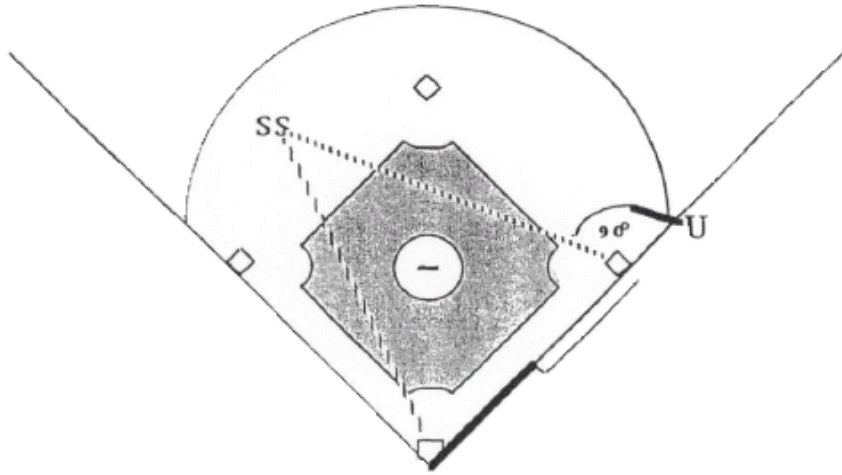
BALL TO THIRD, SHORTSTOP, OR SECOND BASEMAN (WITH NO PRESSURE):

**Base Umpire** - is responsible for the play at first. You will try to maintain a 90 degree angle on all plays. However, it becomes impossible with balls hit to the right side of the infield. Do the best you can. On the right side go directly at the fielder, watching him field and throw the ball. Watch the ball halfway across the infield, then bring your eyes to the bag and get in a set position, square to the bag (10-15 ft. is ideal).

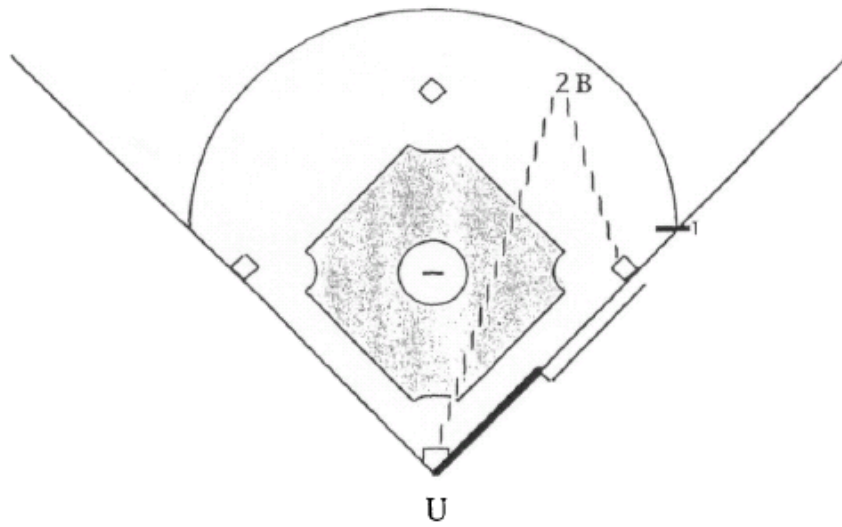
**Plate Umpire** - is responsible for the ground rules on an overthrow at first. He comes out from behind the plate, watching the ball, and moves up the first base line, straddling the foul line. Watch the throw across the field and stop in a standing set position for the play at first. In case of an overthrow, the plate umpire should react toward foul territory with the path of the overthrown ball.



BALL TO SHORTSTOP

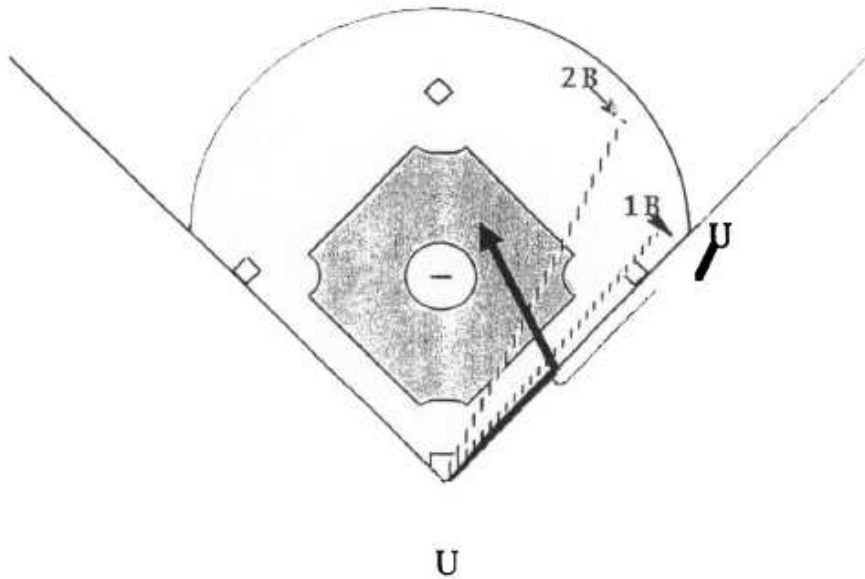


BALL TO SECOND





PRESSURE FROM SECOND OR FIRST



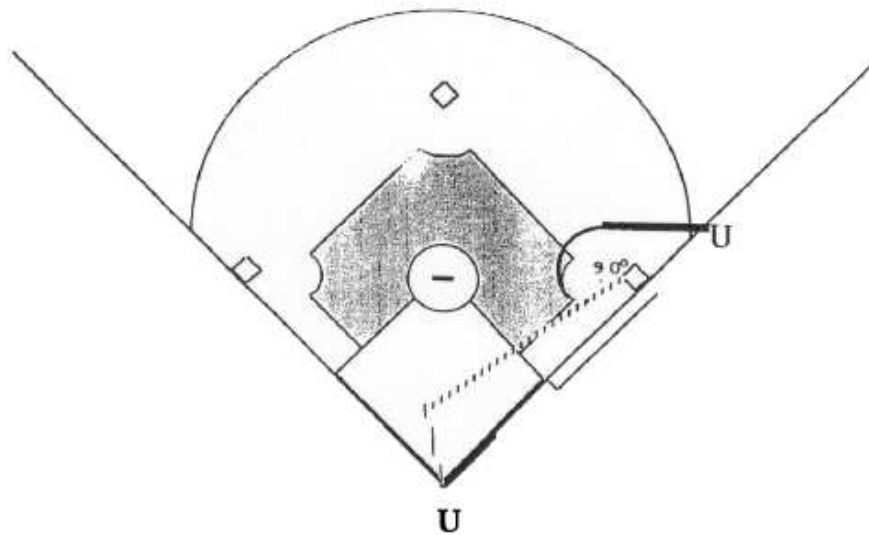
PRESSURE FROM SECOND OR FIRST BASE

**Base Umpire** - Move off the line 2-3 steps in foul territory 15-20 feet from the base. Use this position for all plays you take in foul territory. If you have a fair/foul decision, straddle the line, make the call, and move into position to call the play. If there is an overthrow, the base umpire will be responsible for determining whether the ball entered dead ball territory.

**Plate Umpire** - Move up to the 45-ft. line to observe the play and be ready to take the runner into Second Base in the event of an overthrow.



## IMAGINARY BOX



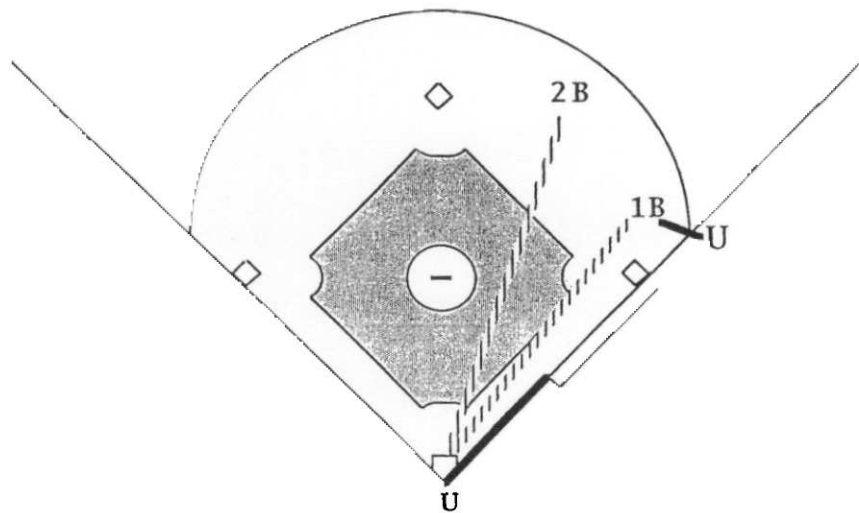
## BALL HIT IN THE IMAGINARY BOX

**Base Umpire** - Come in for an angle and make the call. The base umpire has to really hustle because he will have a farther distance than normal to cover before reaching his 90 degree angle.

**Plate Umpire** - In this area, the plate umpire has the fair/foul call for both base lines, plus whether or not the batter-runner is in the 3-foot running lane. If the batter-runner is hit with the throw to first, it is the plate umpire's call. The plate umpire has to be careful that he does not overrun the original play on the ball. If he does, he is then in a position where he could possibly be hit by the throw.



## SECOND BASE, FIRST BASE, NO PRESSURE



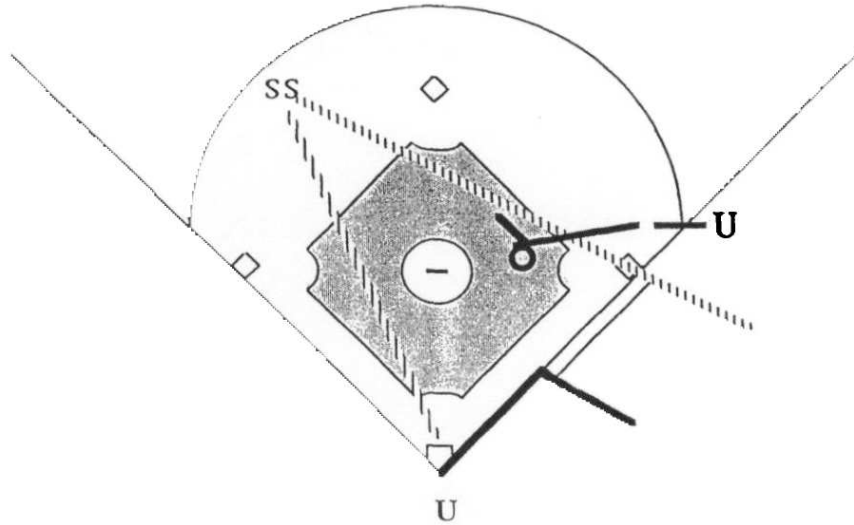
### SECOND BASE, FIRST BASE, NO PRESSURE

**Base Umpire** - Once you determine there will be no pressure from the fielder, move 2-3 steps into fair territory, 15-20 feet from the base. If the pitcher covers 1B, make sure your eyes return to the ball in the pitcher's possession after he touches the base, to make sure he has control of the ball.

**Plate Umpire** - Move up to the 45-ft. line to observe the play and be ready for an overthrow.



## OVERTHROW AT FIRST BASE



## OVERTHROW AT FIRST BASE

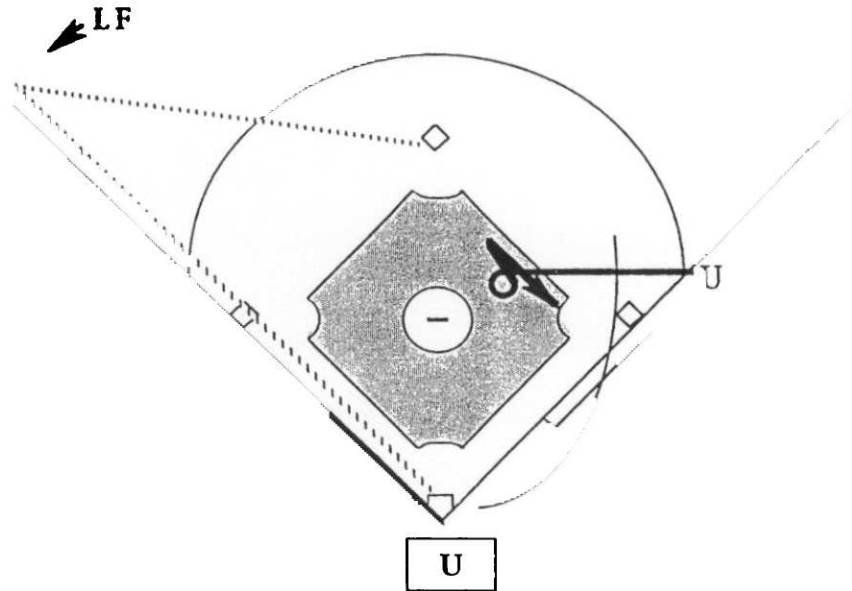
**Base Umpire** - Get your 90 degree angle to call the play. When you see the ball go by the first baseman, react immediately by moving into the infield. You will either pivot and take the batter-runner into second base, or to have an angle on a tag play at first if the runner breaks for second and then goes back to first. Also, moving toward the infield will get you out of the way of the runner if he just rounds the base at full speed.

**Plate Umpire** - On a play at first come up the line to watch the play. As the ball is overthrown, react to the ball toward the out-of-play area so you can see if it lodges or enters the dugout. Both umpires should be watching the ball and be able to call the play, however the plate umpire has primary responsibility.





### SINGLE ON LEFT FIELD LINE NO RUNNERS



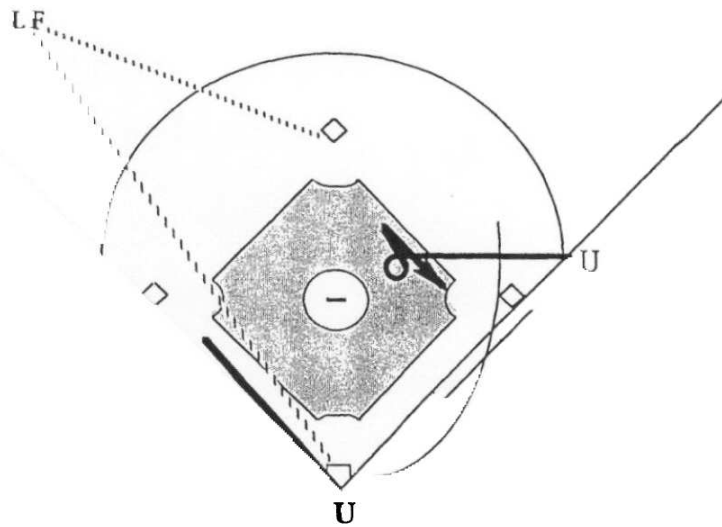
#### SINGLE ON LEFT FIELD LINE

**Base Umpire** - responsible for the batter-runner touching first base and all plays attempted on him. Move into the infield, watching the ball, and pivot approximately 3 feet inside the infield grass. Don't time your pivot to when the batter-runner touches first because if he's fast and decides to go second, you'll be behind the runner going into second. Be in the infield moving toward second, glance back to see the batter-runner touch first, then continue watching the ball. When the batter-runner stops and goes back to first, react back into first with him.

**Plate Umpire** - has the fair/foul catch/no catch call on the line. Move up the line as far as the play will allow you. Be set for the play, make the call. Make sure to straddle the line for the fair/foul call.



SINGLE TO LEFT  
NO RUNNERS



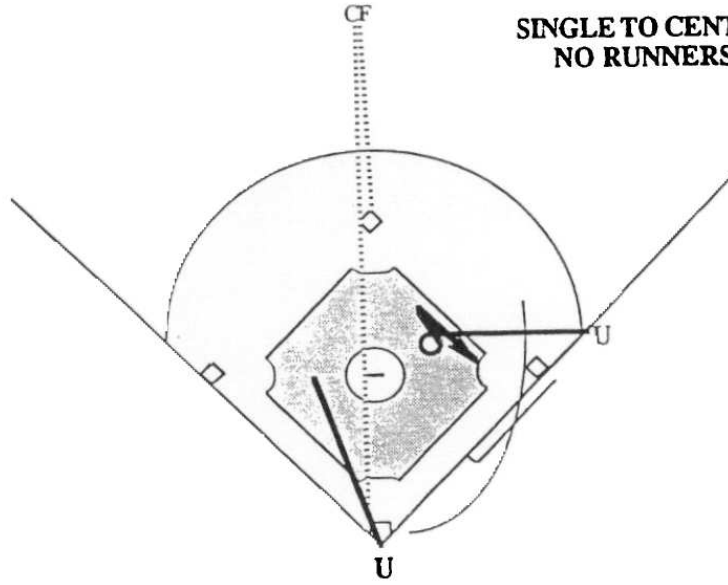
SINGLES, DOUBLES, AND TRIPLES TO LEFT AND CENTERFIELD

**Base Umpire** - Movement is the same as on any single with nobody on base. Move into the infield as you watch the ball. Pivot ahead of the batter-runner touching first base, then move back into first with the runner. On a double, take the runner into second base, and on a triple, glance at the runner touching first and second base and move into the third base cutout ahead of the runner.

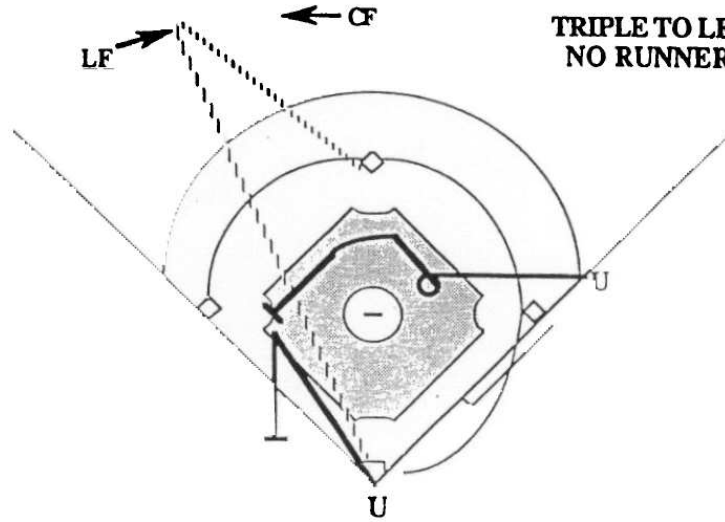
**Plate Umpire** - On singles, doubles, and triples to left and center fields you have the catch/no catch. Move out into the infield without chasing the ball. Work to get an angle for a possible trap situation. Be set for the play, call it, then drift to foul territory on the third base line to stay out of the base umpire's way. Drift foul towards home plate, always watching the ball.



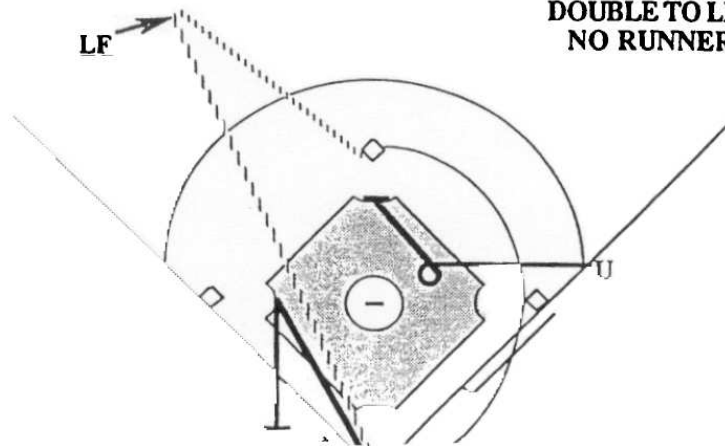
**SINGLE TO CENTER  
NO RUNNERS**

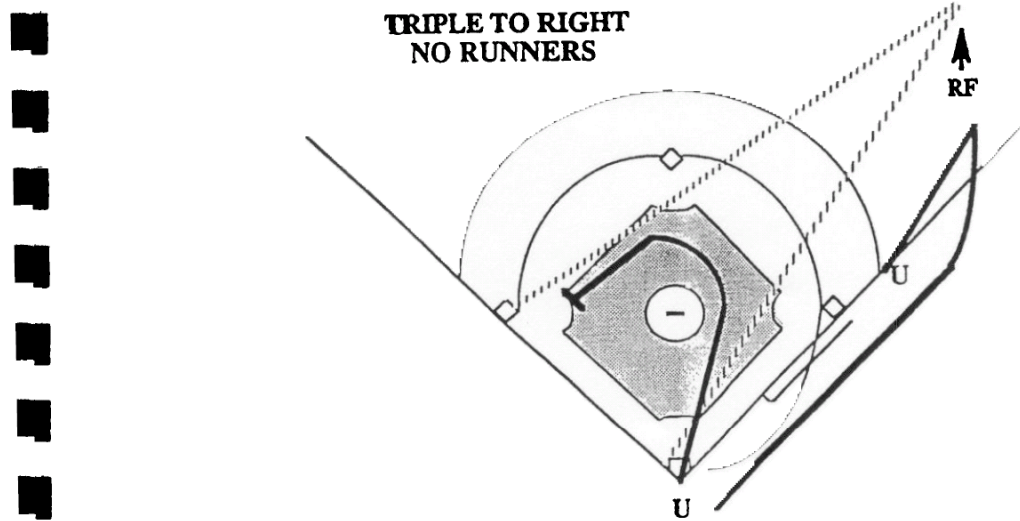
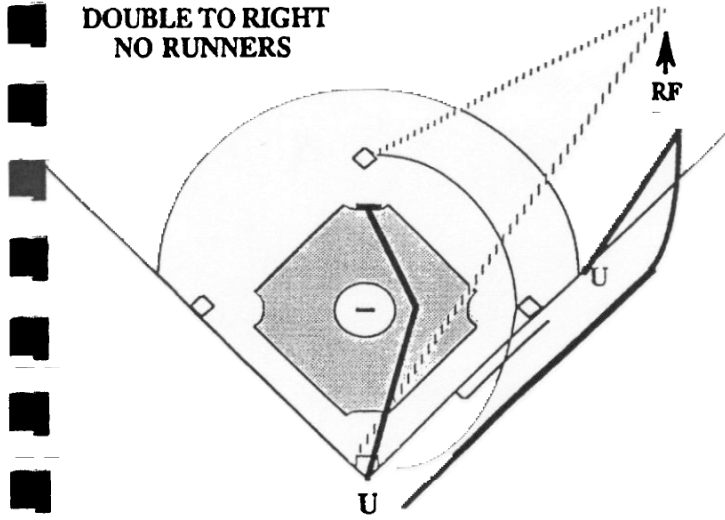


**TRIPLE TO LEFT  
NO RUNNERS**



**DOUBLE TO LEFT  
NO RUNNERS**





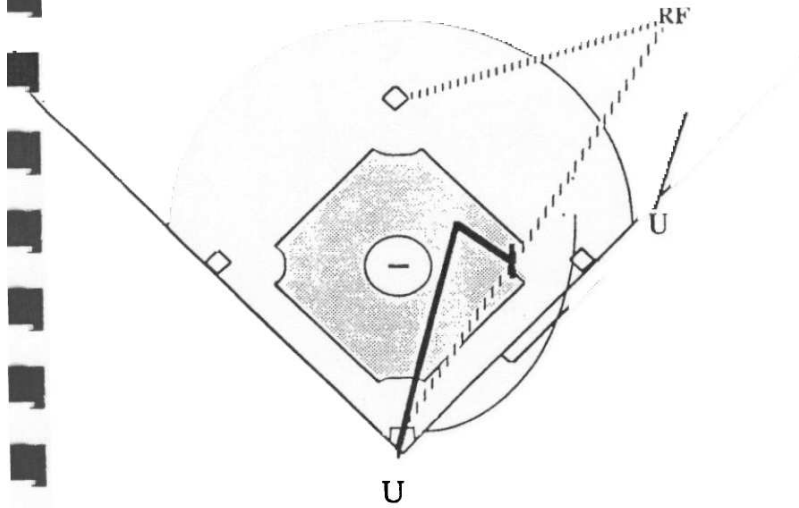
**DOUBLES AND TRIPLES TO RIGHT FIELD**

**Base Umpire** - has catch/no catch (and if ball is on the line, fair/foul). The plate umpire takes the runner to second and/or third, and the base umpire must get back to cover home. As soon as you see there is no trouble with the ball in the outfield, head home in foul territory while continuing to watch the ball. *When the base umpire is actually in position to call a play at the plate, then he should communicate to his partner "I got home!"*

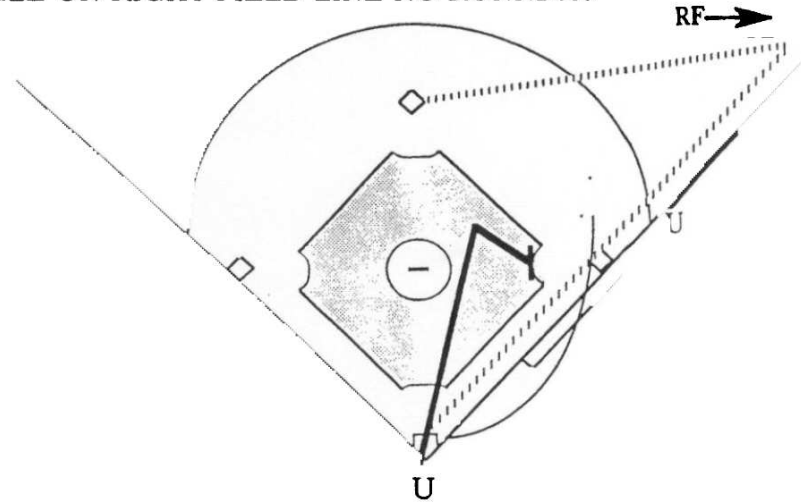
**Plate Umpire** - Move out from the plate with the runner. Cut a little closer to the mound on an extra base play. Glance at the runner touching first base, be ahead of him into second, and then heat him into third. Always watch the hall.



SINGLE TO RIGHT NO RUNNERS



SINGLE ON RIGHT FIELD LINE NO RUNNERS



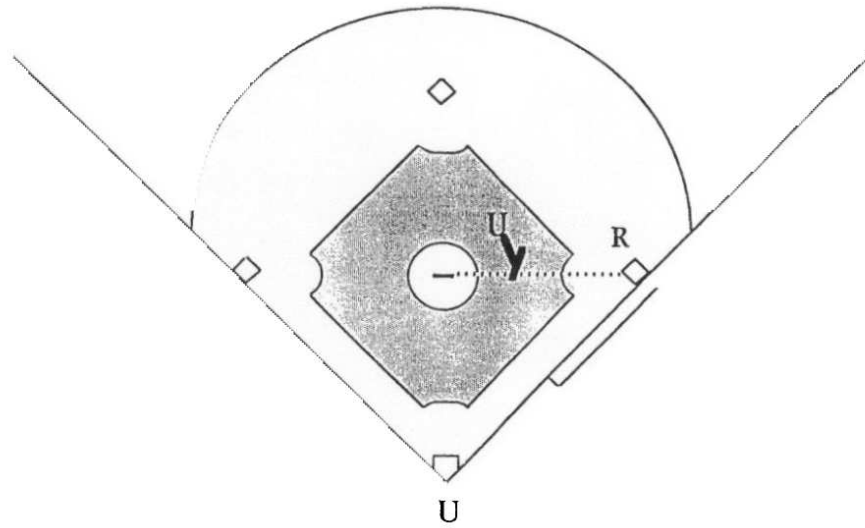
SINGLE ON RIGHT FIELD LINE — SINGLE TO RIGHT

**Base Umpire** - Take the fair/foul, catch/no catch on the ball. Let the ball turn you onto the foul line. Assume a standing set position, straddling the line for the play. Remember, once you're out, stay out. Don't come back into the infield and be too close to a play at first base.

**Plate Umpire** - Take the batter-runner. Move out from behind the plate, watching the ball, and split the difference between the pitcher's mound and first base. This puts you ahead of the runner. As the batter-runner reaches first base, glance over to see him touch. When the batter-runner stops and goes back to first base, go back with him. Stay with the runner until the base umpire returns to the infield and assumes responsibility for him.



## PICKOFF AT FIRST

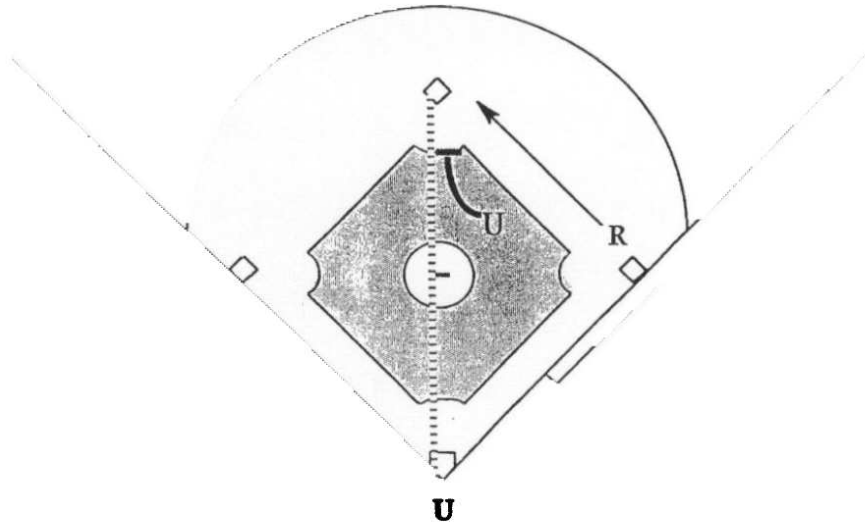
PICKOFF AT FIRST  
RUNNER ON FIRST BASE ONLY

**Base Umpire** - When the pitcher begins his move to first, move toward the 45-foot line to give you an angle at first. You're only going to get 2-3 steps so don't try to get too much. The important thing to remember is to *be set for the play*. The steps are: 1) Right, Left, Right, 2) square up to the base, 3) observe the play in the set position, and 4) make the call.

**Plate Umpire** - Step to the first base side of home plate and watch the play. Do not turn away from the pitcher too quickly and miss a possible balk. You have the ball on an overthrow. Do not remove your mask if there is not an overthrow.



## STEAL RUNNER ON FIRST



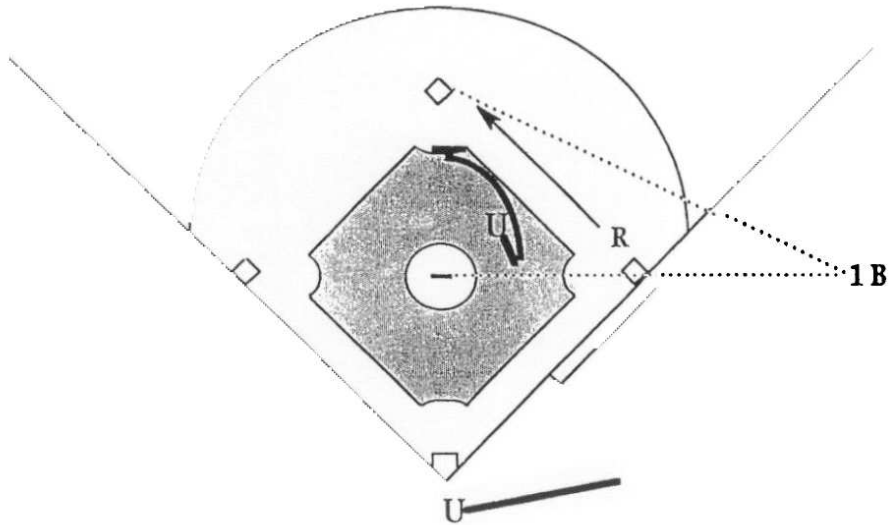
### STEAL — RUNNER ON FIRST

**Base Umpire** - On a steal play the base umpire will see the man on first break. With the pitch, stand up, see the ball clear the batter (watch for a possible check swing), turn and pinch in towards second with the throw. Open your body with the right toe pointing to the base and crosstep towards second base keeping your body open to the throw. Take the throw over your shoulder, letting the ball turn your head into the base. Be set for the play and don't call it too soon. Make sure the fielder holds onto the ball after the tag, and/or the runner stays in contact with the bag. Let the play happen.

**Plate Umpire** - Call the pitch and watch for batter interference. Then step out from behind the catcher and batter and watch the play. Batter interference has priority over watching the play at second base. Stay with the action in the plate area until it is fully completed.



### OVERTHROW ON PICKOFF



### OVERTHROW ON PICKOFF

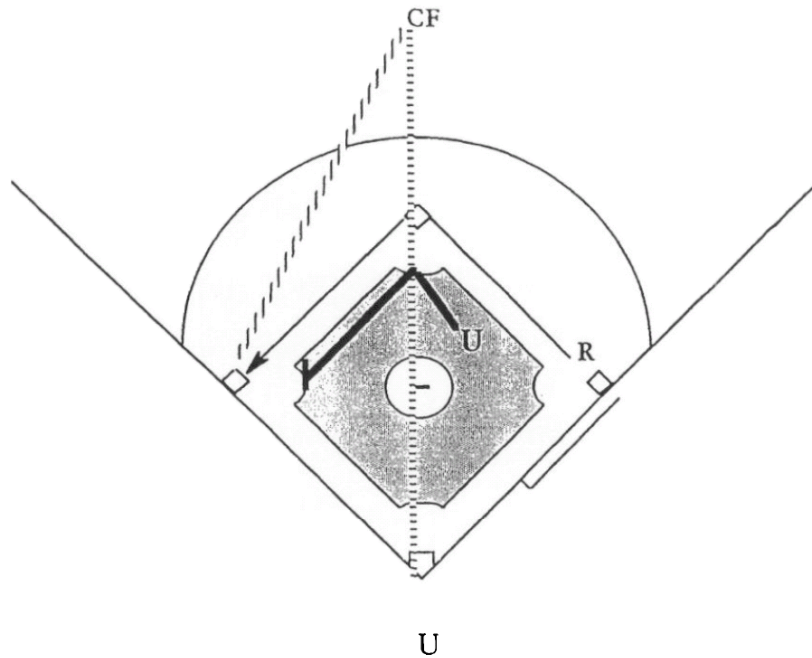
**Base Umpire** - Stay ahead of the runner.

**Plate Umpire** - Move to the right field foul area to see if the ball goes out of play (remove mask).





## OVERTHROW ON STEAL



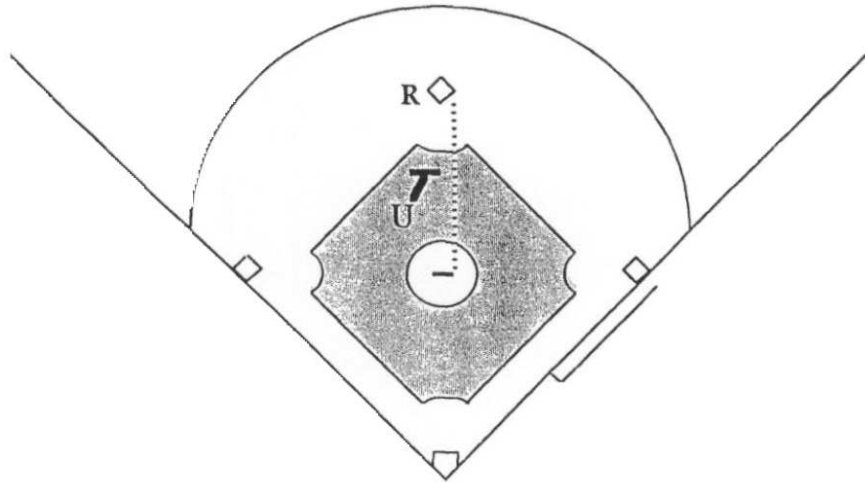
## OVERTHROW ON STEAL AT SECOND (ONE RUNNER, ONE UMPIRE)

**Base Umpire** - As soon as the ball goes by the fielder, break for third, watching the ball. If the runner goes, stay ahead of him. If he breaks and then goes back to second, go back with him. If you cannot beat the runner into 3rd, fight for an angle and get set for the play.

**Plate Umpire** - Stay at home, should the runner try to score on an overthrow at third base.



PICKOFF AT SECOND  
RUNNER ON SECOND

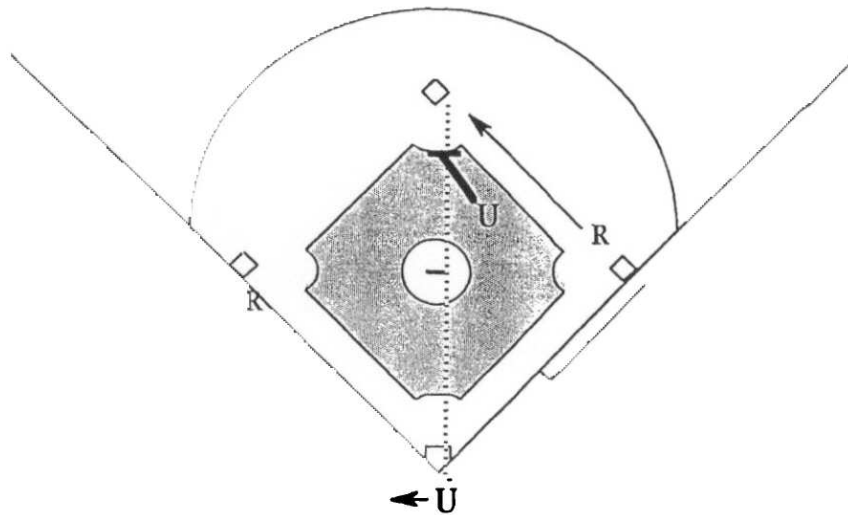


PICKOFF AT SECOND  
RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY

Both umpires have the same responsibilities as a pickoff at first and an overthrow on a pickoff (The plate umpire won't have to go with an overthrow into center field. He can stay at home and watch the ball.).



STEAL AT SECOND  
 RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD



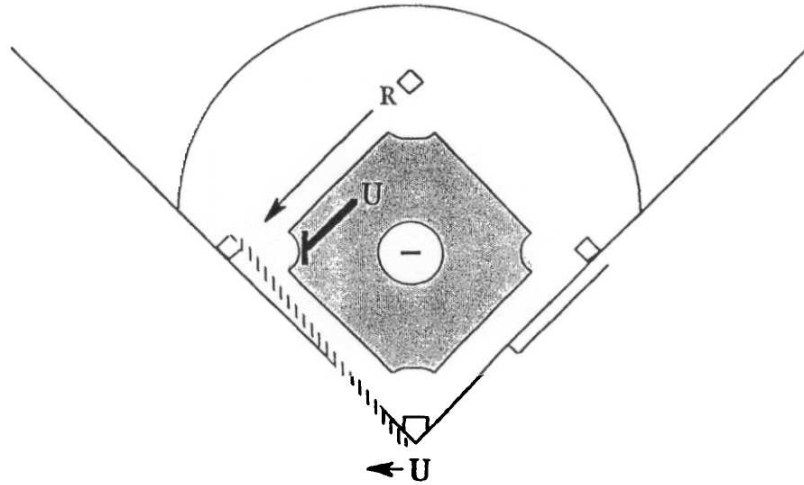
STEAL AT SECOND  
 RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD

**Base Umpire** - The basic movement is the same as a steal of 2B from a runner on 1B only. The important thing to remember with a runner on third is to make sure the catcher throws to second. It is better to be a step short on the tag play at second, than to be about 80 feet from a close tag play at third.

**Plate Umpire** - Call the pitch, watch for interference on the batter, and step out from behind home plate. Stay at home for a possible play at the plate.



STEAL AT THIRD  
 RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY



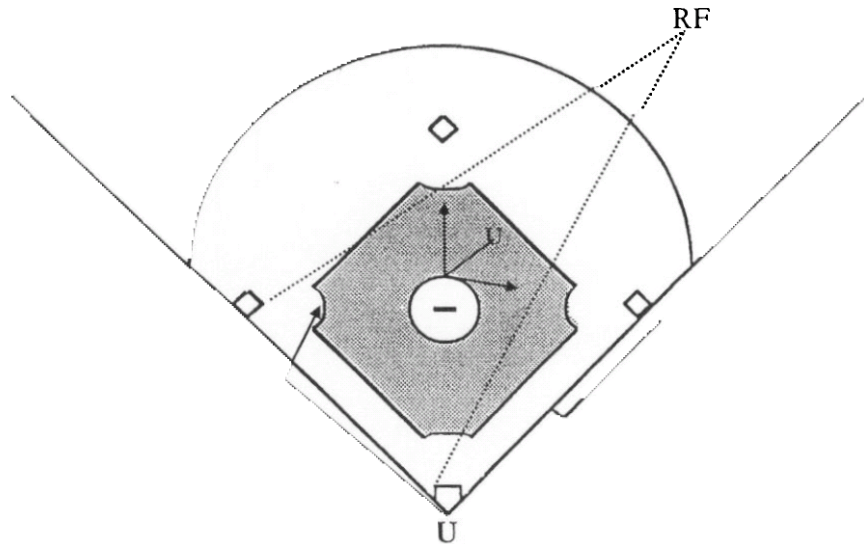
STEAL AT THIRD  
 RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY

**Base Umpire** - As the pitch is delivered, glance back over the right shoulder to see if the runner is breaking to third base. If he does break, move toward third, watching the pitch to the plate. Watch the throw into third and let it turn you into the play. In a double steal situation (runners stealing second and third at once), don't break with the runner going into third. Take a quick crossover step to center yourself between 2nd and 3rd, make sure where the ball is going, then react. Do not get into a foot race with the runner stealing 3rd. Fight for an angle by moving toward an imaginary 45-foot mark on the third base line. Get set and make the call.

**Plate Umpire** - Duties are the same as in other steal situations.



## RUNNER FIRST TO THIRD



### RUNNER FIRST TO THIRD

**Base Umpire** - With a runner on first, you are responsible for the runner touching second base and the batter-runner touching first base. When the ball goes to the outfield, turn with the ball and center yourself at the back of the mound. As the outfielder comes up throwing the ball, the base umpire should react to second base if the ball is thrown directly to the base. If the outfielder throws directly to first base, react directly to first base. If the ball is cut off, let the throw take you to 1B or 2B. If the throw goes to 3B, the plate umpire has responsibility for the runner into 3B. As the outfielder comes up throwing, face the ball and break to the base. Glance at the batter-runner and break to the base to which he's advancing/retreating. The most important thing to remember is to watch the ball. It will take you to the right place.

**Plate Umpire** - The runner advancing from first to third base is your responsibility. The plate umpire should move about 3/4 of the way up to third base in foul territory. If you have:

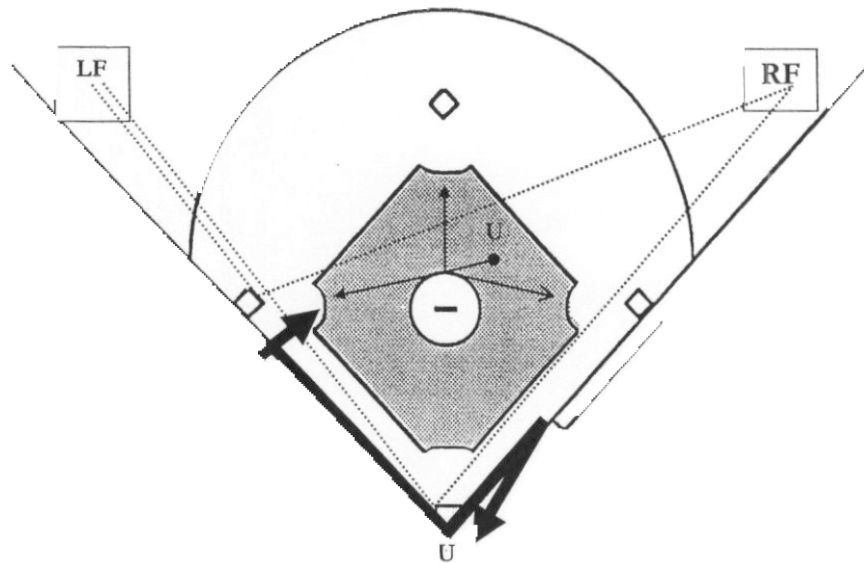
**Ball and Runner** - move into the 3rd base cutout and communicate to your partner  
"I've got 3rd! I've got 3rd!"

**Ball** - Maintain your position 3/4 of the way up the 3rd baseline and in foul territory. Continue to face the ball.

**Runner Only** - Go home and communicate to your partner "I'm going home! I'm going home!"



RUNNER FIRST TO THIRD:  
FAIR/FOUL, CATCH/NO CATCH FOR PLATE UMPIRE



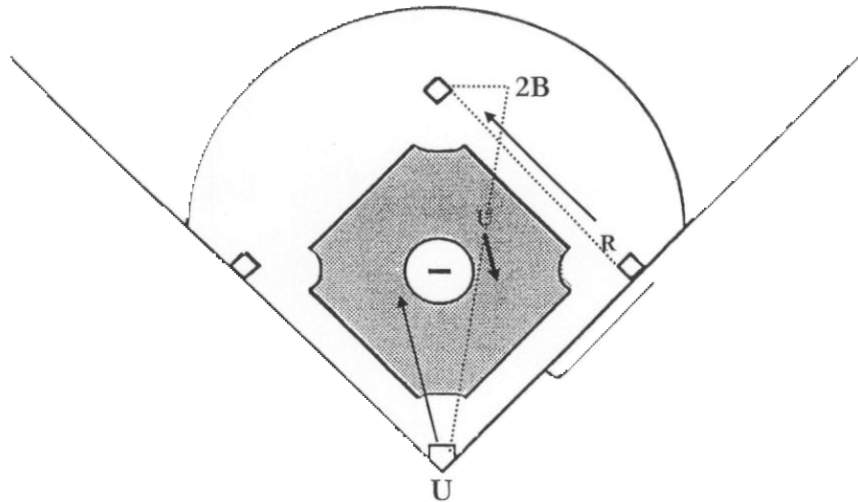
RUNNER FIRST TO THIRD:  
FAIR/FOUL, CATCH/NO CATCH FOR PLATE UMPIRE

**BALL ON THIRD BASE LINE** - Responsibilities are the same for both umpires except that the plate umpire comes up the 3rd base line to make the call. Plate umpire: as the ball is hit up the 3B line, get to the line, STAY on the line and continue up to the 3rd base area (3/4 of the way).

**Plate Umpire** - The plate umpire has fair/foul, catch/no catch. If the ball is up the 1B line (remains in the INF), the plate umpire will move up the 1B line with the ball and the base umpire will take the runner from 1B to 3B. If the ball is hit up the right field line (to the OF), the plate umpire will move up the line and communicate to his partner "I'm on the line! I'm on the line!" Make the call and return home. Once again the base umpire will take the runner on first to third.



DOUBLE PLAY  
 RUNNER ON FIRST  
 BALL SECOND TO FIRST



DOUBLE PLAYS

**Base Umpire** - Step up with the foot on the side that the ball is hit (SS - right foot, 2B - left foot). Step up, turn with the ball. As the ball gets to second base, watch the play. See the play at 2B in a standing set. Register the out or safe on the move toward 1B. Crosstep toward the 45-foot line and assume a regular set position for the play at first. Let the throw to first turn your head and body square to first base. If the runner at second base was safe, go back into second base and sell the call again explaining why he was safe. The Base Umpire is responsible for enforcing the Force Play/Slide Rule up until the point where the fielder releases the throw to first base. Remember that the Plate Umpire is no longer in position to assist with plays at First Base. You must try to get the best possible angle on the play at First Base. This is achieved by always heading towards the 45 foot lane.

**Plate Umpire** - Move up to the left edge of the pitcher's mound. Your responsibility is to ensure that there was no illegal contact by the runner after the throw and to assist the Base Umpire in enforcing the Force Play/Slide Rule.

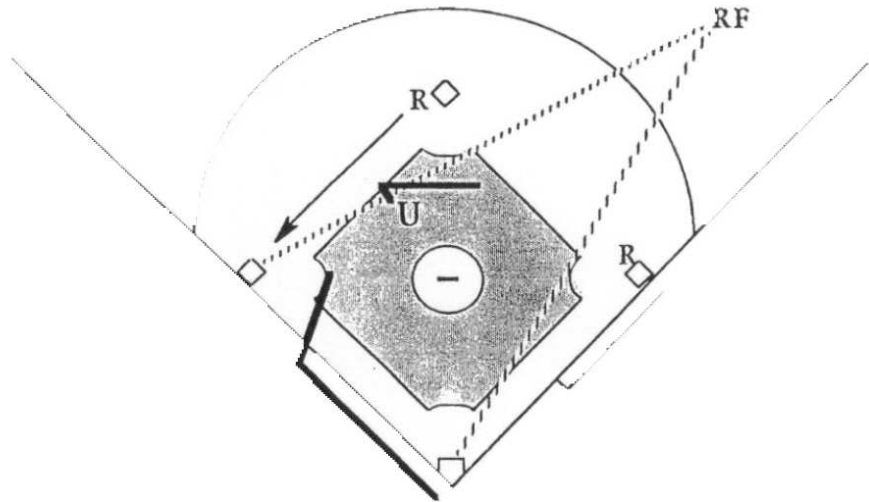








TAG PLAY  
RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND



TAG PLAY  
RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND

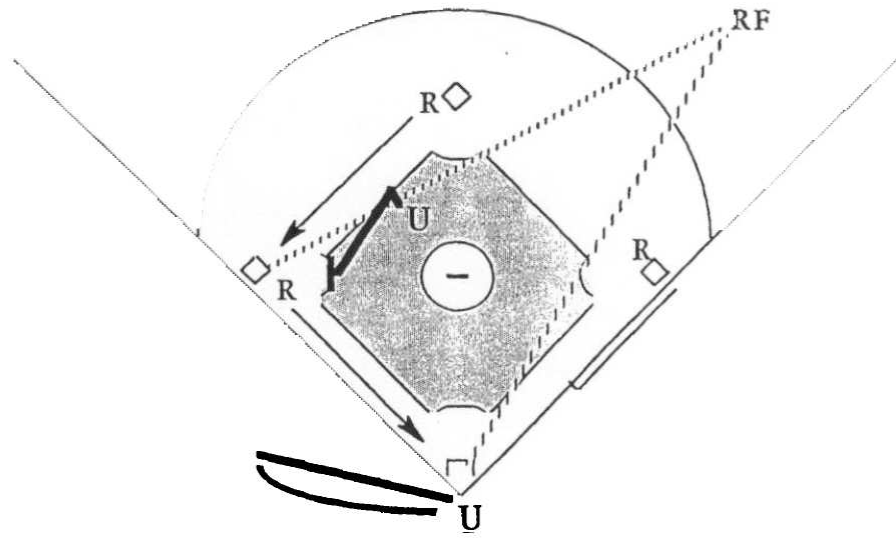
**Base Umpire** - You have responsibility for runners tagging at first, first and second, or second base only. Line the runner tagging up with the fielder catching the ball, eg. on a fly ball to RF, move to the edge of the infield grass between 2nd and 3rd. After the catch, glance at the runner at 1B. If he was tagging and was very close to the base after the catch, consider him to have tagged safely. It is very important that you know if the outfielder actually caught the ball (ie. voluntary release, etc.) As the ball is thrown from the OF, the rest of your movements are the same as on a runner going from first to third base. Keep in mind: you don't have a tag play until a runner goes back to the base to tag. When he does, then move to line up the tag.

With a runner on first base only, the runner will go halfway to second on a ball hit to the outfield. Center yourself behind the mound, see the catch, and drift toward first base.

**Plate Umpire** - With runners on 1st & 2nd, move up the 3rd base line. As you see the runner(s) go back to tag, communicate to your partner: "I've got third if he comes!" If the runner at second goes to third, yell: "I've got third! I've got third!" as you move into the cutout at third for the play. **\*\*Remember\*\*** If the fly ball to the OF is dropped, the plate umpire should immediately communicate "I'm going home! I'm going home!" because the base umpire always has all force plays within the infield.



### TAG PLAY BASES LOADED



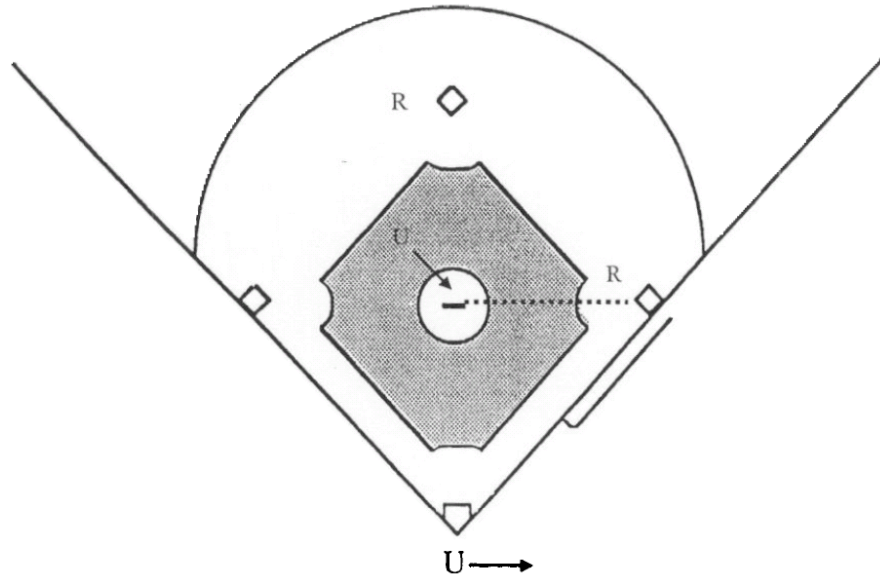
TAG PLAY BASES  
LOADED

**Base Umpire** - You have all tag -ups at second and first and all plays on the bases.  
Let the ball take you to your play.

**Plate Umpire** - You have the tag-up at third and plays at the plate.



PICKOFF AT FIRST  
 RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND



PICKOFF AT FIRST  
 RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND, BASES LOADED

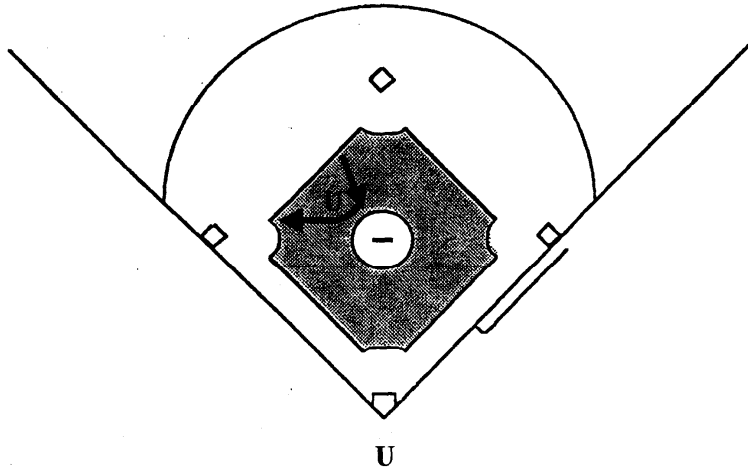
**Base Umpire** - You have the play at first base. It's basically the same as a pickoff attempt at first base with a runner on first only. The difference is that you go directly to the back edge of the pitcher's mound towards the 45' lane, which opens up the angle automatically. Stay aware of what the lead runner is doing. Watch the ball and let it take you to the play.

**Plate Umpire** - Step out and watch the play. You have the ball on an overthrow but do not stray too far away from the plate because of the possibility of the lead runner coming home on the play.

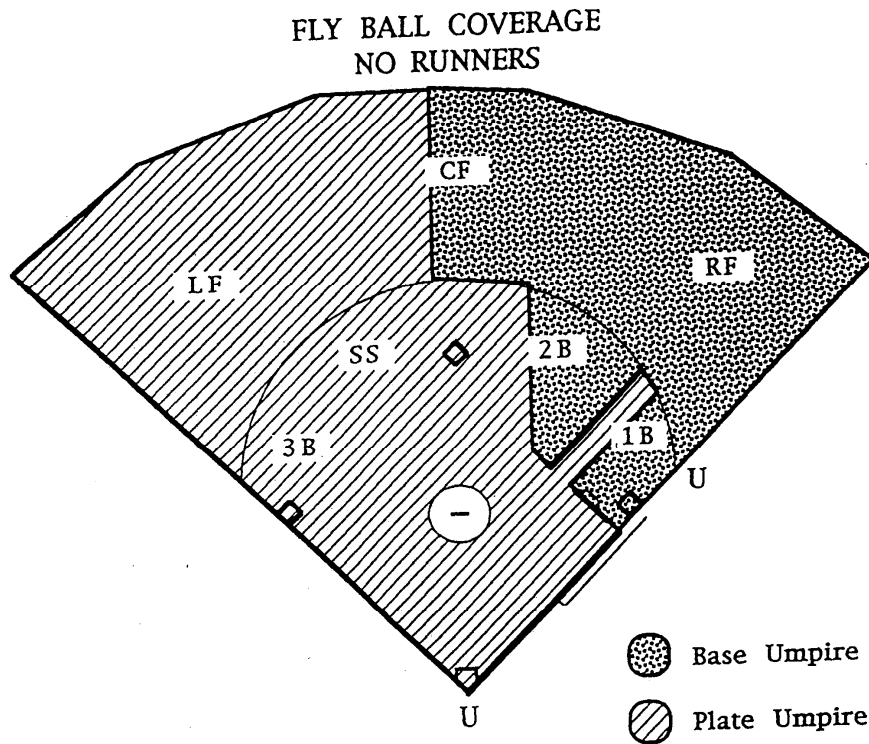


### Runner on Second

With a runner on second base only, the Base Umpire will position himself on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of the pitcher's mound for a potential steal of 3<sup>rd</sup>. On a ground ball to the infield, the base umpire will head to the 45-foot lane to get an angle on the play at first. The base umpire will then take a crossover step, similar to that for a steal at 2<sup>nd</sup> base, to take the return throw and subsequent play at 3<sup>rd</sup>.



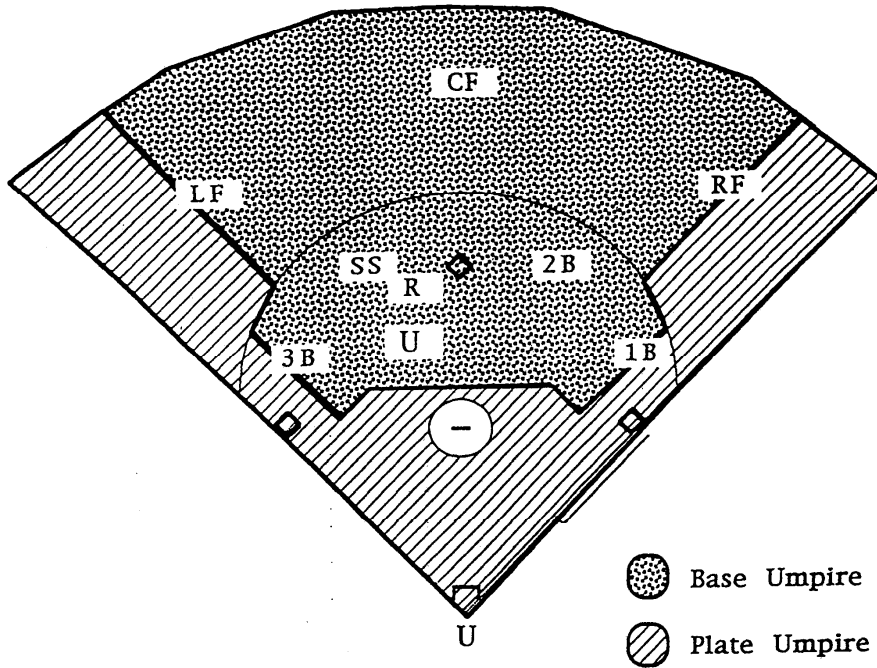
The Plate umpire will come up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line to assist for foot off the base or swipe tag situations. As always the plate umpire is responsible for 3-foot lane interference and overthrows at first base.



In the **Priority Umpire System**, both umpires are responsible to watch the flight of the ball, regardless of the coverage area responsibilities. Each is responsible for making the “**No Catch**” call immediately. However, the “**Catch**” decision should be delayed to allow for the responsible coverage umpire to make the call. The plate umpire is responsible for all “**Fair/Foul**” decisions down the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line and up and including 1<sup>st</sup> base. The base umpire will have all “**Fair/Foul**” decisions beyond 1<sup>st</sup> base, unless forced into the infield on pop-ups.



FLY BALL COVERAGE  
WITH RUNNERS



In the **Priority Umpire System**, both umpires are responsible to watch the flight of the ball, regardless of the coverage area responsibilities. Each is responsible for making the **"No Catch"** call immediately. However, the **"Catch"** decision should be delayed to allow for the responsible coverage umpire to make the call. The plate umpire is responsible for all **"Fair/Foul"** decisions.