

Umpire Signals

The purpose of Umpire Signals is

COMMUNICATION
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YOU MUST COMMUNICATE WITH PARTNERS, PLAYERS, COACHES, and FANS

- Umpires need to communicate with their partners, coaches, and fans
 - They need to know what your decision is on all plays
- The quickest and easiest way to communicate that decision is by giving a signal
 - SAFE/OUT, FAIR/FOUL, ETC.

THE 7 STEPS OF EXECUTING A PROPER SIGNAL

1. Position
2. Stance
3. See the complete play
4. Make a decision
5. Proper timing
6. Proper, crisp signal
7. Verbal call

EXECUTING A COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR PARTNER

1. Use non-verbal communications whenever the situation changes or there is a new batter
2. Use verbal communications during live playing action
3. Make sure your partner acknowledges your communication, whether it is verbal or non-verbal

UMPIRE SIGNALS (Plays and Calls)

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UMPIRE

SIGNALS

Plays and Calls

DO NOT PITCH



SIGNAL

- Right arm straight out with palm and fingers up
- Fingers should be touching each other
- This signal is used by the plate umpire
 - At the beginning of the game
 - At the start of a new inning
 - After time has been granted or after all dead ball situations
- It does not allow any play to occur, TIME IS OUT
- The ball remains dead until it is put in play
- *NOTE: with a left-handed batter, this signal may be given with the left hand to ensure that the pitcher can see it*

CALL

THERE IS NO VERBAL CALL

PLAY or PLAY BALL (make the ball “live”)



SIGNAL

- This is actually a continuation of the do not play signal
- While still implementing the do not play signal with your right arm straight out with palm and fingers up
- Making sure that the pitcher is on the rubber, the catcher is in position, the batter is in the box, and your partner/s are ready to play
- Point to the pitcher
- *NOTE: with a left-handed batter, this signal may be given with the left hand to ensure that the pitcher can see it*

CALL

- “PLAY” or “PLAY BALL”
- This signal is used by the plate umpire after the DO NOT PLAY signal
- At the beginning of the game
- At the start of a new inning
- After time has been granted or after all dead ball situations
- The ball remains dead until it is put in play.

TIME



SIGNAL

- The arms are extended above your head in front of your body
- The palms of your hands should be facing away from you with your fingers fully extended and together, *NOT A FIST, BUT OPEN AND FLAT.*

CALL

- A verbal call of “TIME” should be made at the precise time the hands reach their maximum height
- This signal is used for all dead ball situations to kill play
- Before any play can resume the ball must be put into play after all dead ball situations.

STRIKE



SIGNAL

- From the set position raise to an upright position
- While raising your right hand (open) to ear level
- Bring your hand forward as if to hit a wall with the heel of your hand while closing your hand MAKE A FIST at the start of the forward motion

CALL

- At the same time as your fist would hit the wall you should verbalize “STRIKE” on a called strike. If it is a swinging strike, there should be no verbalization.
- As an alternative, you can verbalize “STRIKE” in the set position and the stand up and give the visual signal



SIGNAL

- From the set position raise to an upright position
- While raising your right hand (open) to about shoulder level
- Straighten your arm to the side or forward at about a 30 degree angle (your preference)
- As you reach the end of your motion, point with one or two fingers and “snap” the wrist to emphasize the signal
- At the same time as you “snap” the wrist, you should verbalize “STRIKE” on a called strike. If it is a swinging strike, there should be no verbalization.

CALL

- At the same time as “snap” the wrist, you should verbalize “STRIKE” on a called strike. If it is a swinging strike, there should be no verbalization.
- As an alternative, you can verbalize “STRIKE” in the set position and the stand up and give the visual signal

OUT



Figure 1



Figure 2

SIGNAL

- Come to a full standing set position
- Raise your right hand (open) up to ear level (See Figure 1)
- Bring your hand forward as if to hit a wall with the heel of your hand.
- Start closing your hand making a fist at the start of the forward motion.
- The forward motion should stop with a closed fist comfortably in front of your body line at the same time your fist would hit the wall (See Figure 2)

CALL

- You should verbalize “HE’S Out”. The emphasis should be on the word “HE’S”

SAFE



Figure 1



Figure 2

SIGNAL

- From the standing OR full set position with your hands flat, fingers together and palms down
- Raise your arms directly in front of your body to shoulder height, just below the chin with the arms parallel to the ground and the hands directly in front of the chest (See Figure 1)
- From this position, extend your hands to each side of your body inline with your shoulders, no higher (See Figure 2).
-

CALL

- As your hands extend verbalize “SAFE”
- Bring your hands back in front of your body and then drop them to your sides

FAIR BALL



SIGNAL

- Start from a standing position with your feet straddling the foul line
- With your arm fully extended shoulder high, point with the thumb tucked in and the index finger extended point into fair territory.
- ALWAYS use the arm that is toward fair territory. Do NOT point across the body to indicate a fair ball

CALL

- There is NOT a verbal call with this signal, JUST POINT.

FOUL BALL

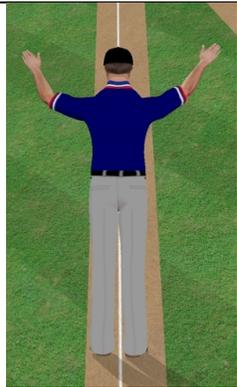


Figure 1

SIGNAL

- Start from the standing position with your feet straddling the foul line. With your arms fully extended above your head and in front of your body line
- The palms of your hands should be facing away from you with your fingers fully extended and together. (Not a fist-but open and flat) (See Figure 1)
- Then with your arm fully extended shoulder high, point with the thumb tucked in and the index finger extended point into foul territory (See Figure 2)

CALL

- A verbal call “FOUL” should be made at the precise time the hands reach their maximum height
- This is known as proper timing
- This signal is used for all dead ball situations to kill play
- Before any play can resume, the ball must be put into play
- After all dead ball situations the ball must be put into play.

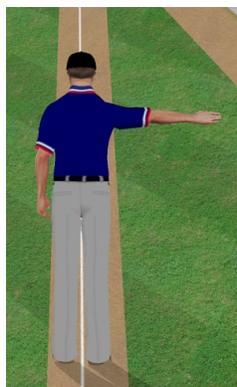


Figure 2

INFIELD FLY



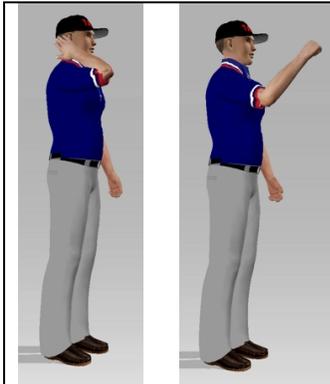
SIGNAL

- Point your right hand with the index finger extended fully above your head as the ball reaches its apex.

CALL

- A verbal call is made as the ball starts its descent
- The verbal call should be “INFIELD FLY.”
- If near a foul line “INFIELD FLY IF FAIR.”

CATCH



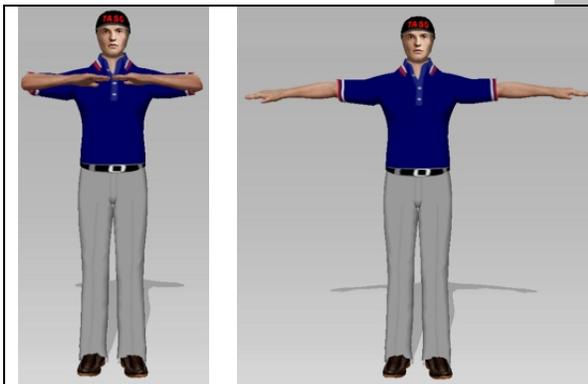
• SIGNAL

- From the standing position raise your right hand (open) up to ear level
- Bring your hand forward as if to hit a wall with the heel of your hand
- Start closing your hand making a fist at the start of the forward motion
- The forward motion should stop with a closed fist comfortably in front of your body line at the same time your fist would hit the wall.

• CALL

- Verbalize, “THAT’S A CATCH!” on any catch made below the waist or where the fielder fell to the ground. On an obvious catch, no verbalization is required.

NO CATCH



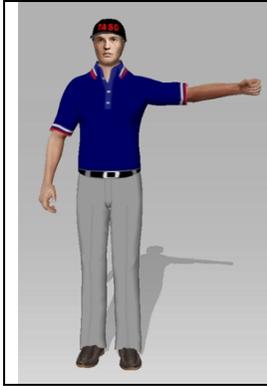
SIGNAL

- From the standing set position with your hands flat, fingers together, and palms down
- Raise your arms fully extended directly to your sides at shoulder height.

CALL

NO VERBAL CALL on an obvious no catch situation. On a trapped ball or where the fielder drops the ball, such as when falling, verbalize “NO CATCH”. The emphasis should be on “NO”

DELAYED DEAD BALL



SIGNAL

- From a standing position raise the left arm shoulder height, fully extended
- At the same time make a closed fist with the left hand
- Hold this position for a two second count.

CALL

- No verbalization is required

FOUL TIP

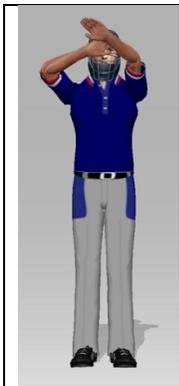


Figure 1



Figure 2

SIGNAL

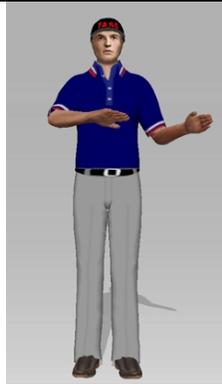
- This signal is only implemented by the plate umpire
- After a foul tip
 - The plate umpire will rise to a standing set position. (so all can see)
 - Raise both hands simultaneously slightly above the head with the left hand forward of the right hand (See Figure 1)
 - Keeping the left hand stationary
 - Bring the right hand forward with your fingers glancing off the palm or back of your left hand (See Figure 2)
- This signal is always followed by a strike signal

CALL

- NO VERBAL CALL.

Fielder was "OFF THE BASE"

(These signals is used to indicate that the runner is safe because the fielder was not touching the base at the time of the play)



SIGNAL

- This signal is used when the fielder pulls his foot off the base while making the catch
- The umpire will rise to a standing position (so all can see)
- Raise both hands to approximately waist height with the hands open and the fingers touching (See Figure 1)
- "Sweep" both hands to approximately shoulder height in the direction that the fielder was off the bag with palms facing in that same direction (See Figure 2)

CALL

- "HE WAS OFF THE BASE"



SIGNAL

- This signal is used when the fielder has to jump up while making the catch and does not touch the base before the runner
- The umpire will rise to a standing position. (so all can see)
- Raise both hands to approximately waist height with the hands open and the fingers touching (See Figure 1)
- "Sweep" both hands to straight up to approximately shoulder indicating that the fielder was above the base (See Figure 2)

CALL

- "HE WAS OFF THE BASE"

GIVING THE COUNT



Count given
"LOW"



Count given
"HIGH"

SIGNAL

- The count is always given using the left hand to indicate BALLS and the right hand to indicate STRIKES
- If there is no scoreboard, or you are trying to correct a scoreboard error, the umpire can give the count HIGH
 - Raise the arms up so the upper arms are parallel to the ground and the forearms are at an approximate 90 degree angle.
 - Show the count
- The count can also be given LOW, such as when there is a scoreboard or you are indicating the count to the pitcher and/or your partner
 - Hold the hands directly in front of the chest and show the count
 - Do NOT raise the hands to the level of your face mask as the fingers are difficult to see with the bars of the mask behind them

PROPER METHODS OF GIVING THE COUNT

 0-0 No balls–No Strikes	 0-1 No Balls – 1 Strike	 0-2 No Balls – 2 Strikes	 1-0 1 Ball – No Strikes	 1-1 1 Ball – 1 Strike
 1-2 1 Ball – 2 Strikes	 2-0 2 Balls – No Strikes	 2-1 2 Balls – 1 Strike	 2-2 2 Balls – 2 Strikes	 3-0 3 Balls – No Strikes
 3-1 3 Balls – 1 Strike	 3-2 3 Balls – 2 Strikes	 <p style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">This is NOT an accepted indication of a Full Count. A "Full Count" is 3 Balls and 2 Strikes and should be given in that manner, as shown to the left of this image.</p>		

SPECTATOR INTERFERENCE



SIGNAL

- This signal is used when a spectator has interfered with a fielder's attempt to field a ball while the ball is in a live ball area. Spectator interference does not apply if the fielder reaches into a dead ball area (e.g.; the stands) and the spectator interferes with the catch
- The umpire will rise to a standing position. (so all can see) and call TIME, then
- Raise both hands above the head and grasp the left wrist with the right hand
- The umpire may point in the direction of the offending spectator to further indicate the nature of the call

CALL

- “TIME.....THAT’S SPECTATOR INTERFERENCE”

SUBSTITUTION



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

SIGNAL

- Extend your left arm straight up from the shoulder with the hand open and the fingers touching (See Figure 1)
- Bending your arm at the elbow, “sweep” the hand above your head one or two times (see Figure 2)
- With your arm still raised, point at the player who is coming into the game (See Figure 3)

CALL

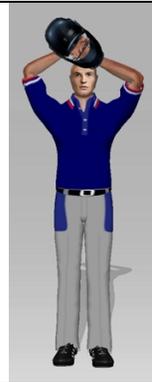
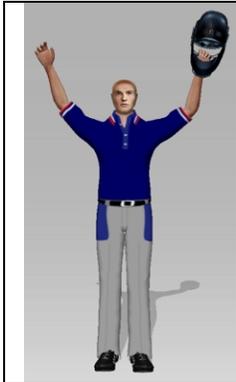
- NO verbal call

SCORE THE RUN



- This signal is used **ONLY** on a timing play where U1 needs to indicate to the coaches and scorekeepers that a run scores because the runner touched the plate **before** the last out was made
- Extend your right arm and point emphatically down at the plate
- State, **LOUDLY**, “Score the run, Score the run, That run scores”
- Make certain that the score is correct in a close game, especially if there is a scoreboard

RUN DOES NOT SCORE



- This signal is used **ONLY** on a timing play where U1 needs to indicate to the coaches and scorekeepers that a run does not score because the runner touched the plate **after** the last out was made
- Extend your arms upwards similar to the **TIME** signal and wave both arms emphatically above your head
- State, **LOUDLY**, “No Run, No Run, That run does NOT score”

COMMUNICATIONS

BETWEEN

UMPIRES

GETTING HELP ON THE CHECK SWING



SIGNAL

- This signal is initiated only by the plate umpire
- The umpire will step to the first base side of the batter and/or catcher so that he can clearly see his partner
- He will point with his LEFT hand at his partner

CALL

- "DID HE GO?"

RESPONSE TO THE CHECK SWING REQUEST

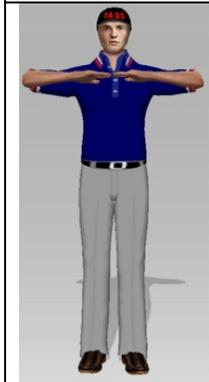


SIGNAL

- If, after being requested by U1 to assist with a check swing, the base umpire believes that the batter swung at the ball he will stand up straight (so all can see)
- The base umpire will give the OUT signal to indicate that the batter swung

CALL

- "YES, HE DID"



SIGNAL

- If, after being requested by U1 to assist with a check swing, the base umpire believes that the batter did NOT swing at the ball he will stand up straight (so all can see)
- The base umpire will give the SAFE signal to indicate that the batter did not swing

CALL

- "NO, HE DIDN'T"

GETTING HELP ON A CALL



SIGNAL

- This signal is initiated by either umpire when he needs immediate help on a call. It is usually on a tag play where the umpire was blocked from seeing the tag or a play at first where there is a possibility of a pulled foot by the fielder
- The umpire will turn so that he can clearly see his partner
- He will point with his LEFT hand at his partner

CALL

- Ask a question regarding the play, such as “Did he pull his foot?” or “Did he make a tag?”

RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FOR HELP ON A CALL



SIGNAL

- Only after being requested by your partner, respond with what you saw to assist your partner in getting the call right. The base umpire will give the OUT signal if the response will indicate that the runner is out

CALL

- Respond with the appropriate verbal response to the question



SIGNAL

- Only after being requested by your partner, respond with what you saw to assist your partner in getting the call right. The base umpire will give the SAFE signal if the response will indicate that the runner is not out

CALL

- Respond with the appropriate verbal response to the question

INFIELD FLY SITUATION

(There are three accepted signals for indicating an Infield Fly situation)



SIGNAL

- Your right arm, with your hand flat, palm toward your body, extended across your chest
- This signal should also be returned by your partner(s)
- This is one of three signals that may be used to communicate with your fellow umpire(s) that the infield fly rule is in effect

CALL

- No verbal call



SIGNAL

- Pat the top of your head with the palm of your right hand
- Your partner(s) should return the signal

CALL

- No verbal call



SIGNAL

- Touching the bill of your hat
- This signal should also be returned by your partner(s)

CALL

- No verbal call

MY CALL / YOUR CALL



My Call



Your Call

SIGNAL

- **FIRST, and most importantly**, look directly at your partner and make eye contact
- MY CALL – Tap your chest, with your hand flat, palm toward your body
- YOUR CALL – Point directly at your partner

CALL

- No verbal call

SHOWING THE NUMBER OF OUTS TO YOUR PARTNER

	<p><u>SIGNAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend your forearms straight out from your body and parallel to the ground - Indicate the number of outs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NOTE: The count is given with the fingers pointing upwards, while outs are signaled with the fingers points to the side and approximately parallel to the ground</i> <p><u>CALL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NO verbal call
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ROTATING ON A HIT

There are three signals for indicating rotation on a possible play following a hit by the batter

	<p><u>SIGNAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend your index fingers in the direction of your partner • Move the fingers in a circular motion to indicate “rotation” <p><u>CALL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO verbal call
	<p><u>SIGNAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point, with both hands, in the direction in which you will be moving on the play <p><u>CALL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO verbal call
	<p><u>SIGNAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This signal is used when there are less than two outs and there is a runner on second base only or runners on first and second • This signal indicates that U1 will move to third base on a fly ball where the runner at 2nd may tag up and try to advance Otherwise, U1 will remain at the plate for a play there (e.g.: on a base hit to the outfield) • Make a fist with the left hand, and extend the index finger (or index and middle finger) of the right hand • Tap your right hand on top of your left hand while pointing toward third base

PL IS STAYING AT HOME (no rotation)



SIGNAL

- Extend the hands/arms out to the side of your body, NOT directly in front of it
 - *Make sure you have your hands out to the sides of your body so you don't give the appearance that you are pointing at your crotch!!*
- Point at the ground to indicate that you are staying at the plate on a hit by the batter

CALL

- NO verbal call

TIMING PLAY



SIGNAL

- Tap the wrist (typically wrist watch position) with the index and middle fingers
- Your partner(s) should return the signal

CALL

- NO VERBAL CALL.

WHAT'S THE COUNT?

It happens sometimes; you lose the count and need to ask your partner for help.



SIGNAL

- Make sure your partner is looking at you!!
- Place both hands in front of your body with only the index fingers extended
- Rotate the fingers around each other in a circular motion
- Your partner should respond with the proper count in a discreet manner

CALL

- NO verbal call

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

There are two types of verbal communications used by umpires to convey information about during playing action.

- When umpires are rotating positions during playing action, such as those shown below, the verbal communication should be **LOUD!!**
 - U1 moving to cover third base (“I’ve got third if he comes”)
 - U1 returning to the plate (“I’m going back home”)
 - U2 moving to cover the plate (“I’ve got the plate”)
 - U2 going out on a trouble ball to right field (“I’m going out”)
 - U1 taking a fly ball down in right field with runners on base (“I’ve got the ball” or “I’m on the line”)
 - You must be loud enough to make sure that your partner can hear you over the players, fans, and coaches.
 - Keep stating the communication until you are sure your partner has heard you.
 - When you hear your partner’s verbal communication, acknowledge it so he will know that you are aware of what he is doing
-
- When making a call of catch/no catch that is not a close play (e.g.; a routine catch in your area of responsibility), remember that your partner is watching the runner. Let him know if a catch was made so he can stop his movement.
 - You should state “That’s a catch” **just loud enough for your partner to hear you.**
 - Using his name (“That’s a catch, John, that’s a catch”) will help your partner to pick up on the verbal communication.

ACKNOWLEDGING VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS DURING PLAYING ACTION



- Acknowledge your partner’s verbal communication during playing action, *especially on rotations*
- Do NOT look at your partner. This will take your eyes off of the playing action and make it difficult for you to make a call on any possible play
- Simply point at your partner to let him know that you heard his verbal communication
- Your partner should see you pointing and know that you have acknowledged his communication