

Falls LL Jr. Umpire Clinic



March 2025
Adam Grossman - UIC

Training Plan



- Intros & Goals
- Responsibilities
 - Umpire, Manager, Players, Fans
 - Your Equipment
- League Specific Rules
 - AAA vs. Coast
 - Baseball vs. Softball
- PreGame Home Plate Meeting
- Home Plate Umpires
- Field Umpires
- Q&A

Intros & Goals

Introductions

- Name
- Have you umpired before?
- Why are you excited to umpire?
- Is there anything that makes you nervous about umpiring this season?

Goals this season

1. Build confidence in yourselves!
2. Help you become a better umpire
3. Provide opportunities to earn money
4. Support Falls Little League
5. Have fun so you to come back next year!

Game Responsibilities



“Players Play. Umpires Call. Coaches Coach. Fans Support”



Players Play



Umpires Call



Coaches Coach



Fans Support

- When everyone sticks to their role the game goes smoothly
- WHEN people forget their roles (even adults) it's OK to remind them
- **Head Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their Coaches, Players AND Fans**

Jr. Umpire Adult Support - Game Manager



District 9 mandates a “Game Manager” must be appointed for any game with Jr. Umpires

- The Game Manager is a non-coach legal-aged adult selected at the start of a game.
 - This person is usually a parent or scorekeeper
- They will be present at the pregame plate meeting and introduced to Umps & Coaches
- If only one Jr. umpire is present, an Adult Volunteer must join as the second umpire

Responsible for:

- Being a dedicated adult support person for both Jr. Umpires
- Making final decisions on weather/field safety related play (rain, lightning,etc.)
- Supporting umpires with any behavioral issues with players, coaches or fans.
 - Game Managers do have the authority to eject people for unsportsmanlike behavior

Not Responsible for:

- Knowing the Little league rule books
- Deciding rules or game play based judgements
 - They are not a “review booth” or an arbiter of contested calls

Umpire Equipment - Protective Gear

The Home Plate Umpire will wear...

1. **Head Gear** can either be a conventional mask or hockey-style helmet with a dangling throat guard.
2. **Chest Guard** under the shirt to protect the chest, shoulders and torso.
3. **Protective athletic supporter** is to be worn by male umpires and is strongly recommended for female umpires to protect the groin area.
4. **Shin Guards** under the pants to protect shins and knees.
5. **Close-toe shoes** ideally with a hard toe cover.



Umpire Equipment - Umpire Tools

1. **Pitch Indicator** – To keep track of balls, strikes, and outs. Some versions also track innings.
2. **Ball Bag** – A ball bag or two that attaches to the belt that holds 2-3 baseballs
3. **Plate Brush** – A small brush to clean the plate between innings, after plays at home plate, or as the need arises.
4. **Red Flag (Field Umpire)** - used to indicate when a base runner leaves the base prior to the pitch reaching the batter.
5. **Lineup Book/Wallet [Optional]** – Each team is to provide a lineup prior to the start of the game. The home team's Game Changer is the official score book.



Have your Rule Book Handy



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2025 Little League Int'l Rule Changes



New Rules for 2025 - Equipment

Pregame Equipment Checks are now the Manager's Responsibility

"Umpires are not required to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game. The manager of each team is responsible for ensuring that all equipment is legal and proper for play according to Little League rules."

- If managers have questions it is their responsibility to ask before the game
- Umpires are instructed to get verbal confirmation from managers at the home plate meeting
- **Violation Penalty: Immediate Player and Manager Ejection and next game suspension**

No Bat Alterations

"No bat, in any level of Little League Baseball or Softball play, is permitted to be altered. Products such as, but not limited to, choke-knobs, choke-up assists, or thumb protectors are considered alterations or modifications to the bat and are not permitted." (Also includes pine tar or grip sprays)

- Occurs when: A batter steps into the batter's box with and illegal bat
- **Violation Penalty: Immediate Player and Manager Ejection**

Umpires: Be proactive! Don't stay silent if you see a violation pregame, before play or an at-bat! These rules are for player safety and we want to avoid ejections if at all possible.

How To Do an Equipment Check



Players line up bats, helmets and catcher's gear on the fence outside the dugout.

Helmet/Catcher's Gear Check

1. NOCSE Stamp must be visible on the helmet (not covered by stickers)
2. No cracks in the helmet visor or earflaps and interior padding must be intact
3. Face guards or cages must be by the helmet manufacturer. No Loose screws
4. Throat guards on catcher's masks are required and must be properly attached
5. Check all buttons or snaps are secured on shin and chest pads.



Bat Check

1. USA Baseball stamp must be on the handle just above the grip tape.
2. USSSA ("U Trips") bats are not allowed
3. Check grip handles for loose tape or foreign substances (pine tar/grip sprays)
4. No cracks in the barrel
5. Wooden bats must be solid, single piece, rounded, and unlaminated



If equipment is in violation, it must be fixed or removed.
It is the manager's responsibility to ask the umpire if they have a question.

New Rules for 2025 - Other



Electronic Devices – One-way communication to the catcher

“A manager or coach is permitted to use one-way electronic devices from the dugout to the catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. A manager or coach is prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member (including a manager or coach) while on offense, and a manager or coach shall not use the device outside the dugout/bench area.”

- Since FallsLL will not be providing comms to teams we encourage managers to only use catcher comms if both managers agree.

Clothing, Jewelry and Helmet Stickers

- Jewelry is now OK except pitcher’s throwing hand.
- Single color full length arm sleeves are OK except white/gray for baseball or yellow for softball.
- Helmet stickers are now OK provided they are appropriate content and don’t cover the NOCSE stamp.

Falls LL Rules - Point of Emphasis



Red Flag when runners leave early

"A red flag is necessary equipment for a base umpire. It is used to indicate when a base runner leaves the base prior to the pitch reaching the batter."

When a Runner leaves early drop the red flag on the infield dirt. Do not call time.

1. If the runner does not try to advance or the ball is not put into play, pick up the flag and return to position.
2. If the runner advances (steals a base): Call time, point to the flag, bring the runner back.
3. If the batter hits the ball and reaches base safely: The runner who left early may only advance the number of bases the batter advanced from where they started. If they advance further, call time replace the runner
 - a. i.e. a runner who left early from 1B can only advance to 2B on a single or 3B on a double
4. If the runner is out on any play made when leaving early the out stands.

BB Upper Division Specific Rules



Falls Rules are Basically LL Rules



- Majors and Coast play by Standard Little League rules.
- AAA plays standard LL rules except for rules on stealing, last inning run limits and game time.

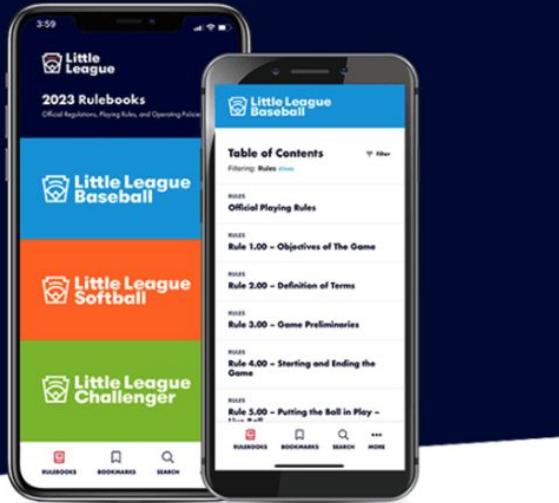
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Review of Pitching/Catching Limits



BASEBALL PITCH COUNT BY LEAGUE AGE



AGES 13-16



AGES 11-12



AGES 9-10



AGES 6-8

95 PITCHES PER DAY

85 PITCHES PER DAY

75 PITCHES PER DAY

50 PITCHES PER DAY

Majors/Coast/AAA

BASEBALL PITCH COUNT THRESHOLDS

Baseball pitchers **league age 14 and under** must adhere to the following rest requirements:

And here's the pitch	
66+	4
PITCHES	DAYS REST

And here's the pitch	
51-65	3
PITCHES	DAYS REST

And here's the pitch	
36-50	2
PITCHES	DAYS REST

And here's the pitch	
21-35	1
PITCHES	DAYS REST

And here's the pitch	
1-20	0
PITCHES	DAYS REST

Pitcher/Catcher Play

- If a pitcher starts the batter under the pitch limit, they can exceed the limit to finish the batter.
- >40 pitches can't Catch
- >3 Innings as Catcher can't Pitch

Baseball AAA - League Specific Rules



	AAA
# of Innings	5 innings
End of Inning	3 outs or 5 runs scored
# of Fielders	9 Players. 3 Outfielders. May start with (8) players
Minimum Play	All players must play 9 total defensive outs (3 innings). Minimum six (6) consecutive defensive outs (2 innings)
In Field Fly Rule	No
IBB	No
Pitch Count	LL Pitch count rules apply. Note: If a pitcher starts a batter under the limit, they may exceed the pitch limit to finish the batter
Dropped 3rd Strike	No. Batter is out on dropped 3rd strike
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No leads until ball has reached the plate - One steal/advance per batter. No further advancement on catcher overthrow. No stealing home. - Runner must return to base when the pitcher has the ball on the rubber.
Silding	No head first slides
Bunting	Yes. No Slash Bunting
Scoring	5-run limit per inning. No unlimited run innings.
Mercy Rule (15-10-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings (2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Eight (8) runs or more after five (5) innings (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead).
Time Limit	- No new innings to start after 1 1/2 hours. Games shall not exceed 2 hours.

Baseball Coast - Standard Little League Minors Rules



	Coast
# of Innings	6 innings
End of Inning	3 outs or 5 runs scored (except last inning)
# of Fielders	9 Players. May start with (8) players.
Minimum Play	All players must play 9 total defensive outs (3 innings). Minimum six (6) consecutive defensive outs (2 innings)
In Field Fly Rule	Yes
IBB	Yes. One per batter per game. (No pitches needed)
Pitch Count	LL Pitch count rules apply. Note: If a pitcher starts a batter under the limit, they may exceed the pitch limit to finish the batter
Dropped 3rd Strike	No. Batter is out on dropped 3rd strike
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard Little League rules - No leads until ball has reached the plate (leaves the pitcher's hand for SB). Stealing home is allowed. - Runner must return to base when the pitcher has the ball on the rubber.
Silding	No head first slides
Bunting	Yes. No Slash Bunting
Scoring	5 run limit per inning, except for the last full inning of the game as declared by the umpire.
Mercy Rule (15-10-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings (2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Eght (8) runs or more after five (5) innings (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead).
Time Limit	- No time limit unless a field is time limited or is booked after. When limited no new innings 1:40, 2:00 hard stop

Baseball Majors - Standard Little League Majors Rules



	Majors
# of Innings	6 innings
End of Inning	3 outs
# of Fielders	9 Players. May start with (8) players.
Minimum Play	All players must play 9 total defensive outs (3 innings). Minimum six (6) consecutive defensive outs (2 innings)
In Field Fly Rule	Yes
IBB	Yes. One per batter per game. (No pitches needed)
Pitch Count	LL Pitch count rules apply. Note: If a pitcher starts a batter under the limit, they may exceed the pitch limit to finish the batter
Dropped 3rd Strike	Yes. Ball is live on dropped 3rd strike if 1B is unoccupied or two outs
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard Little League rules - No leads until ball has reached the plate (leaves the pitcher's hand for SB). Stealing home is allowed. - Runner must return to base when the pitcher has the ball on the rubber.
Silding	No head first slides
Bunting	Yes. No Slash Bunting
Scoring	No run limits per inning.
Mercy Rule (15-10-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings (2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Eight (8) runs or more after five (5) innings (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead).
Time Limit	- No time limit unless a field is time limited or is booked after. When limited no new innings 1:40, 2:00 hard stop

Softball AAA - District 9 Interlock Rules



	Softball AAA
# of Innings	6 innings
End of Inning	3 outs or 5 runs scored (unlimited runs for last full inning. Last inning must be declared by umpire before start)
# of Fielders	9 Players. 3 Outfielders. May start with (8) players
Minimum Play	All players must play 9 total defensive outs (3 innings). Minimum six (6) consecutive defensive outs (2 innings)
In Field Fly Rule	No
IBB	No
Pitching	A pitcher may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings or six (6) defensive outs per game
Dropped 3rd Strike	No. Batter is out on dropped 3rd strike
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Runner must be on the base when the pitcher is in the eight (8) foot radius circle and in possession of the ball.- No leads until the pitch crosses the plate. (Doing so is an OUT)- One advance per batter only on a passed ball. No further advancement on catcher overthrow. No stealing home.
Silding	No head first slides
Bunting	No. A ball that is swung at and travels only a few feet is not considered a bunt.
Scoring	5-run limit per inning. No unlimited run innings.
Mercy Rule (15-10-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings (2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead);- Ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead);- Eight (8) runs or more after five (5) innings (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead).
Time Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- No time limits unless field is in use following the game.- Time limits must be discussed at the plate meeting prior to the game. No New Inning may begin at or after 30 minutes prior to the time limit stated at the Plate Meeting.

Softball AAA - Player/Coach Pitching Rules



- Player Pitch for 3 strikes or 4 balls
- On Ball 4 the batter's coach shall then pitch to the batter and the batter shall retain their strike count.
- Coach pitches up to 4 pitches (1 additional if 4th pitch was a foul ball) or until the Plate Umpire calls 3 strikes. There are no walks. If the Plate Umpire calls 3 strikes, the batter is out.

a. Player and coach pitchers must pitch from a pitching plate at 35 feet from home plate. When a coach is pitching, the Player pitcher must be located within the pitching circle next to or behind the coach.

b. Once a coach pitches to four (4) of his team's batters within a given inning, the coach pitcher will stay out for the remainder of that inning.

c. A player may pitch a maximum of two (2) innings or six (6) defensive outs per game.

d. If a player pitcher hits three (3) batters and each batter is awarded first base, the batting team's coach will coach pitch for the remainder of the inning.

Softball Coast - District 9 Interlock Rules



	Softball Coast
# of Innings	6 innings
End of Inning	3 outs or 5 runs scored There is no run limit after 5 innings or the designated last inning if the game is shortened before 5 innings of play.
# of Fielders	9 Players. 3 Outfielders. May start with (8) players
Minimum Play	All players must play 9 total defensive outs (3 innings). Minimum six (6) consecutive defensive outs (2 innings)
In Field Fly Rule	Yes
IBB	Yes
Pitching	A pitcher may pitch a maximum of three (3) innings or nine (9) defensive outs per game
Dropped 3rd Strike	No. Batter is out on dropped 3rd strike
Stealing	- Runner on the base when the pitcher is in the eight (8) foot radius circle and in possession of the ball. - No leads until the ball is pitched. (Doing so results in an OUT)
Silding	No head first slides
Bunting	No. A ball that is swung at and travels only a few feet is not considered a bunt.
Scoring	5-run limit per inning. No unlimited run innings.
Mercy Rule (15-10-8)	- Fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings (2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead); - Eight (8) runs or more after five (5) innings (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead).
Time Limit	- No time limits unless field is in use following the game. - Time limits must be discussed at the plate meeting prior to the game. No new Inning may begin at or after 30 minutes prior to the time limit stated at the Plate Meeting.

Softball Majors - District 9 Interlock Rules



	Softball Majors
# of Innings	6 innings
End of Inning	3 outs. No run limits.
# of Fielders	9 Players. 3 Outfielders. May start with (8) players
Minimum Play	No player shall sit two innings in a game before every other player on the team has sat out one inning
In Field Fly Rule	Yes
IBB	Yes
Pitching	A pitcher may pitch a maximum of three (3) innings or nine (9) defensive outs per game
Dropped 3rd Strike	Yes. Ball is live on dropped 3rd strike if 1B is unoccupied or two outs.
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Runner on the base when the pitcher is in the eight (8) foot radius circle and in possession of the ball.- No leads until the pitch is released from the pitcher's hand. Runner is OUT if she leaves early.
Silding	No head first slides
Bunting	No. A ball that is swung at and travels only a few feet is not considered a bunt.
Scoring	5-run limit per inning. No unlimited run innings.
Mercy Rule (15-10-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings (2-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead);- Ten (10) runs or more after four (4) innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead);- Eight (8) runs or more after five (5) innings (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead).
Time Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- No time limits unless field is in use following the game.- Time limits must be discussed at the plate meeting prior to the game. No New Inning may begin at or after 30 minutes prior to the time limit stated at the Plate Meeting.

FIELD TRAINING



Pre-Game: Field & Equipment Checks



Arrive 20 minutes before game time

- Check field conditions
 - Infield bases & dirt, foul lines, out of bounds areas, impediments to players
- Player equipment check (offer help to managers if they want)
 - Bats & Helmets - Only USA Baseball bats are allowed
 - Players are properly equipped (cups & dangling throat guard for catchers)
- Field Dimensions
 - Baseball: Pitcher's rubber is 46' from back of home plate. Bases are 60' apart
 - Softball: Pitcher's rubber is 40' from back of home plate. Bases are 60' apart



Pre-Game: Home Plate Meeting



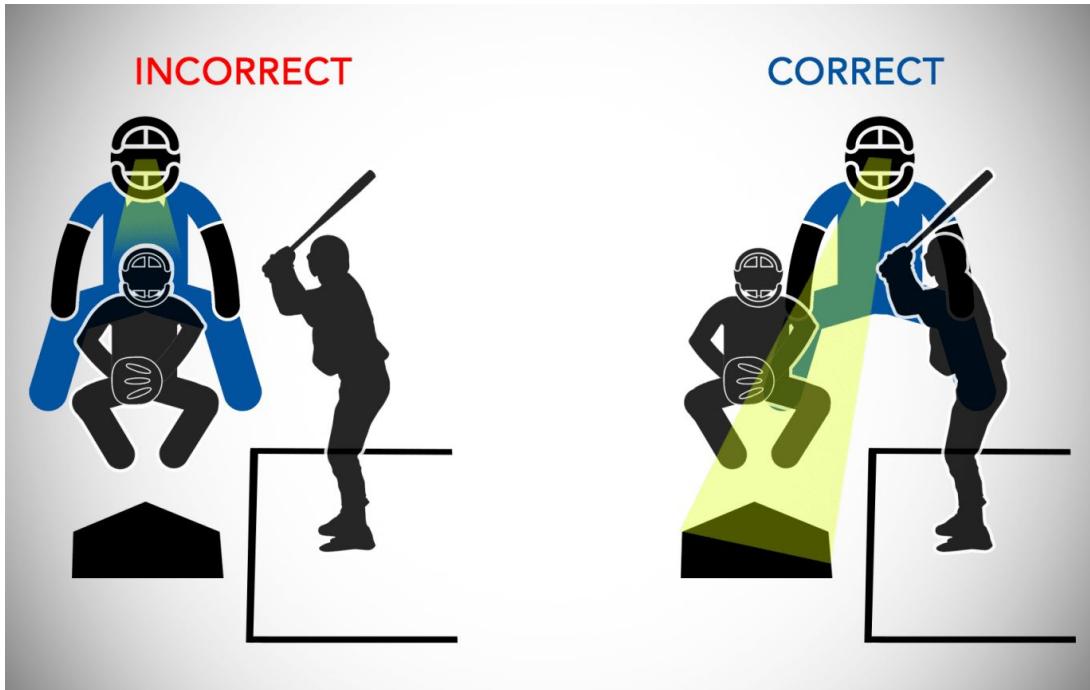
5 minutes before game time - ask that the Home team take the field

- Introductions
- Make sure a Game Manager is designated
 - Do not start the game until one has been appointed for you.
- Verbally Confirm with Managers
 - Managers have done equipment checks
 - All present players are at the top of the line up
 - Any pitcher or catcher restrictions (e.g. player #7 can is ineligible to pitch)
 - Managers exchange lineups - lineups are final
 - All lineup changes must go through the umpire
- Ground Rules Review
 - Game Time Limits
 - Confirm Division specific rules (e.g. AAA for stealing)
- Insist on Sportsmanship
 - Remind the coaches that only they can call on the umpire to discuss a call
 - They should wait for action to stop and then ask for time before doing so
- Answer questions, if any
 - Do not let your plate meeting turn into a rules clinic.



Home Plate Umpire

Starting Position: The Slot



- **Feet Placement**
 - Behind and left or right of the catcher
 - Left foot in line with the batter's back heel
 - Right foot in line with the heel of the catcher's right foot
- **Head Height**
 - Chin slightly above the catcher's helmet
 - Clear line of sight to all parts of the strike zone, including the outside corner of the plate

[Explaining "The Slot" Video Link](#)

Calling Strikes & Balls

- Strike-zone
 - Height: “ARMPITS to TOP of KNEES” when batter assumes a natural stance
 - Width: AAA one ball width wide of the plate
- Strike
 - Swing and miss
 - Any part of the ball passes through the Strike Zone and not struck at by the batter
 - Fouled or bunted foul by the batter with less than 2 strikes
 - Touches the batter as the batter strikes at it or touches the batter in the Strike Zone
 - Becomes a foul tip (ball is live and in play)
- Give the Count
 - Balls in Left hand (first), Strikes in Right hand (second)
- Mechanic Videos
 - [Called Strike Mechanic](#)
 - [Called Ball Mechanic](#)



Verbal Call vs. Silent Call

- Verbalizing the right calls will provide clarity and give you credibility
- Be confident and loud enough so the pitcher could hear you



PLAY	VERBAL CALL	HAND SIGNAL
Called Strike	“STRIKE”	Hammer Fist (RH)
Called Strike 3	“STRIKE. OUT.”	Punch Out
Ball	“BALL”	NONE
Safe	“SAFE”	Extended Arms
Out	“OUT”	Hammer Fist (RH)
Foul	“FOUL”	Arms up

PLAY	VERBAL CALL	HAND SIGNAL
Swinging Strike	NONE	Hammer Fist (RH)
Fair	NONE	Point Fair

Other Verbal Calls

- The Count:
 - “Two Balls. One Strike”
 - Balls in Left hand (first), Strikes in Right hand (second)
- “Play” + point to pitcher
- “Time” + signal two hands up

Scoring (Exceptions)

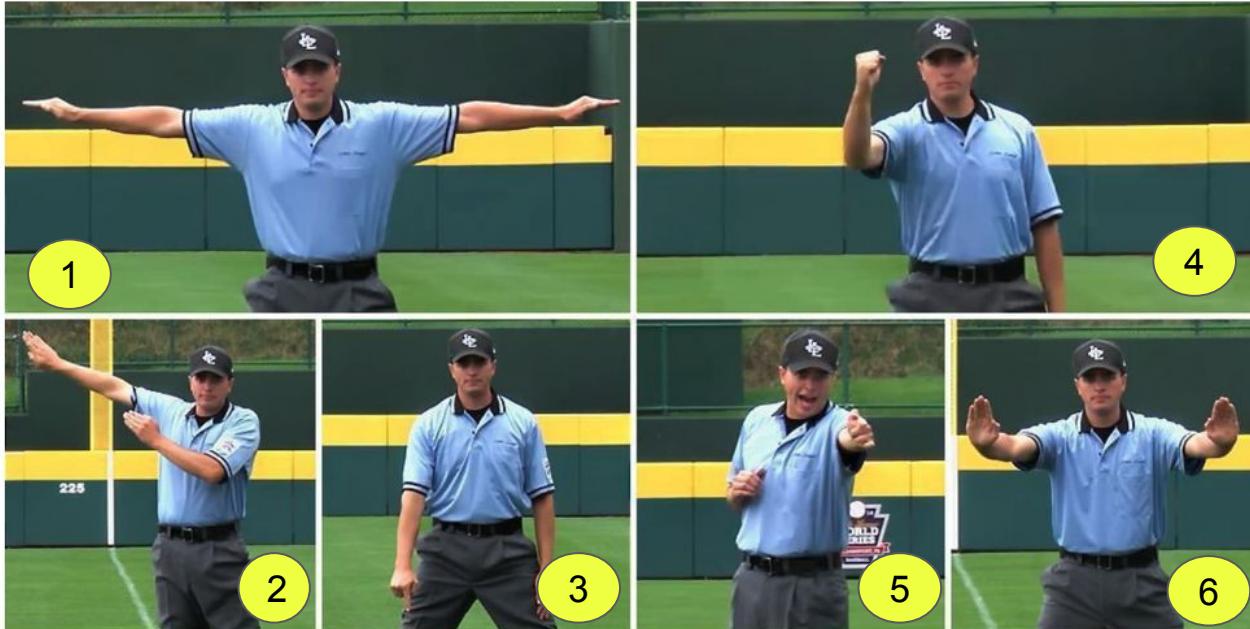
A run is scored each time a runner advances to and touches first, second, third and home before three outs to end the inning.

EXCEPT when the third out is made...

1. by the batter-runner before he touches first base.
2. by any runner being forced out.
3. by a preceding runner who is declared out because he failed to touch one of the bases. (upon appeal)

Field Umpires

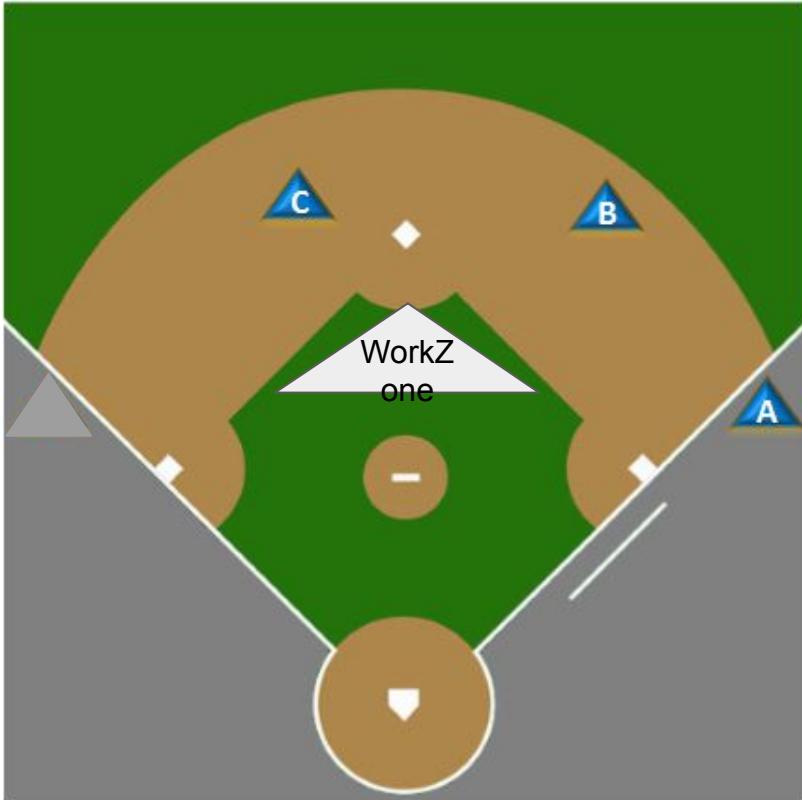
The 6 Basic Field Mechanics



- 1. SAFE
- 2. Safe - Off the Bag
- 3. Safe - Ball on the Ground
- 4. OUT
- 5. Out - on the tag
- 6. Foul

[The "Basic 6" Videos](#)

Field Umpire Positions: 2-Person Crew



Situation	Starting Position
No Runners	A
Runner on 1st	B
Runners on 1st & 3rd	B
All other situations	C

A: In Foul Territory. 10-12 feet behind 1B

[Position "A" Video](#)

B: Between 1st & 2nd. 25-35 feet from 1st. On OF grass.

[Position "B" Video](#)

C: 15-30 feet from 2nd. 2-3 steps behind & left of SS. On OF grass.

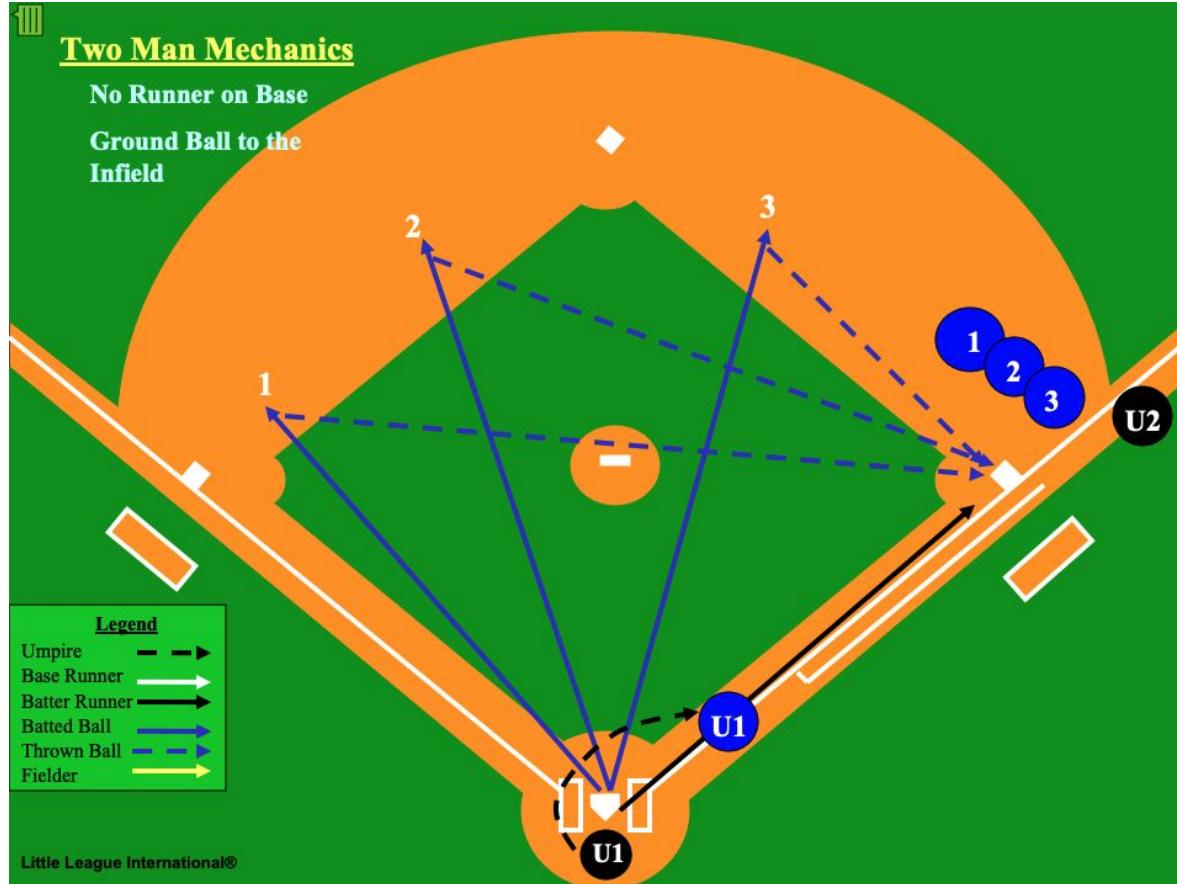
[Position "C" Video](#)

The 6 Rotations

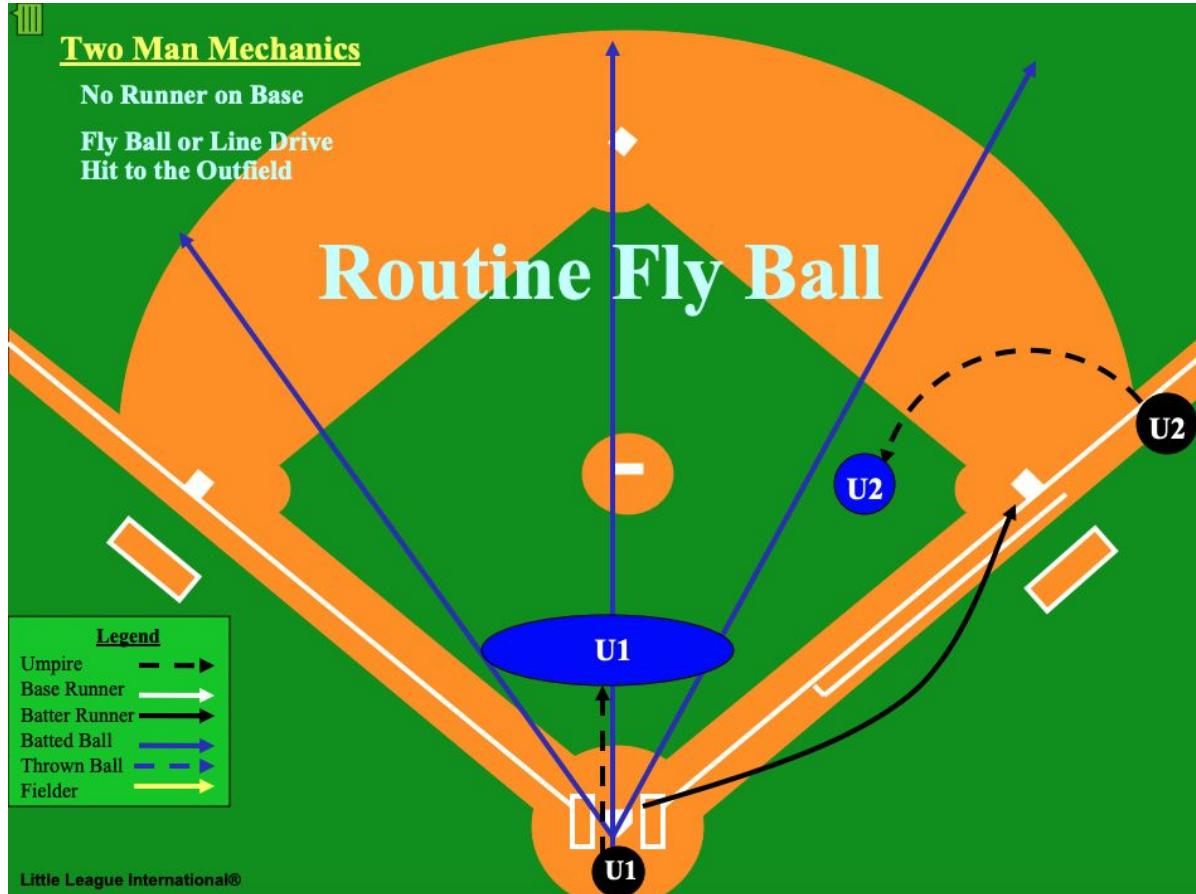
- When a batted ball is put in play, the umpire goes into motion.
- These six rotations will put you in the right position for >90% of plays.
- Practice makes perfect

	Starting Situation	U1 Starting Position	Ball Hit To...
S1	No Runners	A	Infield
S2	No Runners	A	Outfield
S3	1st or 1st & 3rd	B	Infield
S4	1st & 3rd	B	Outfield
S5	All other situations	C	Infield
S6	All other situations	C	Outfield

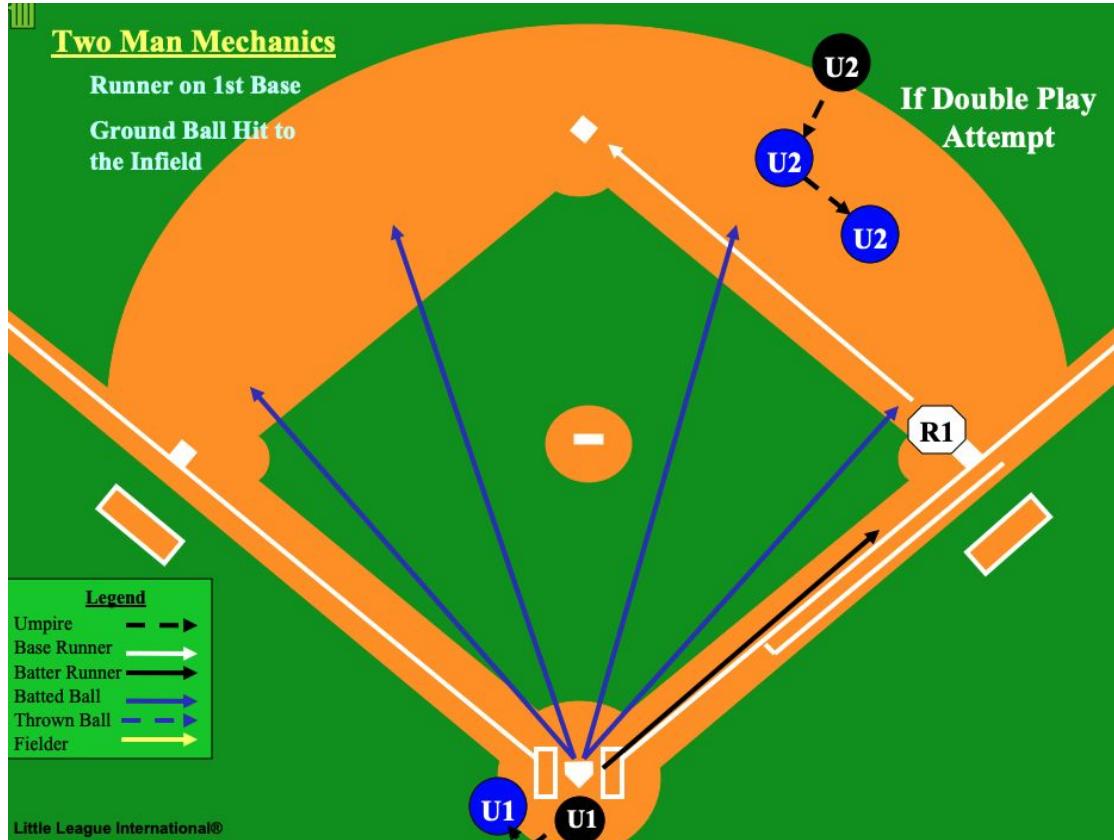
S1: No Runners | Ball to the Infield



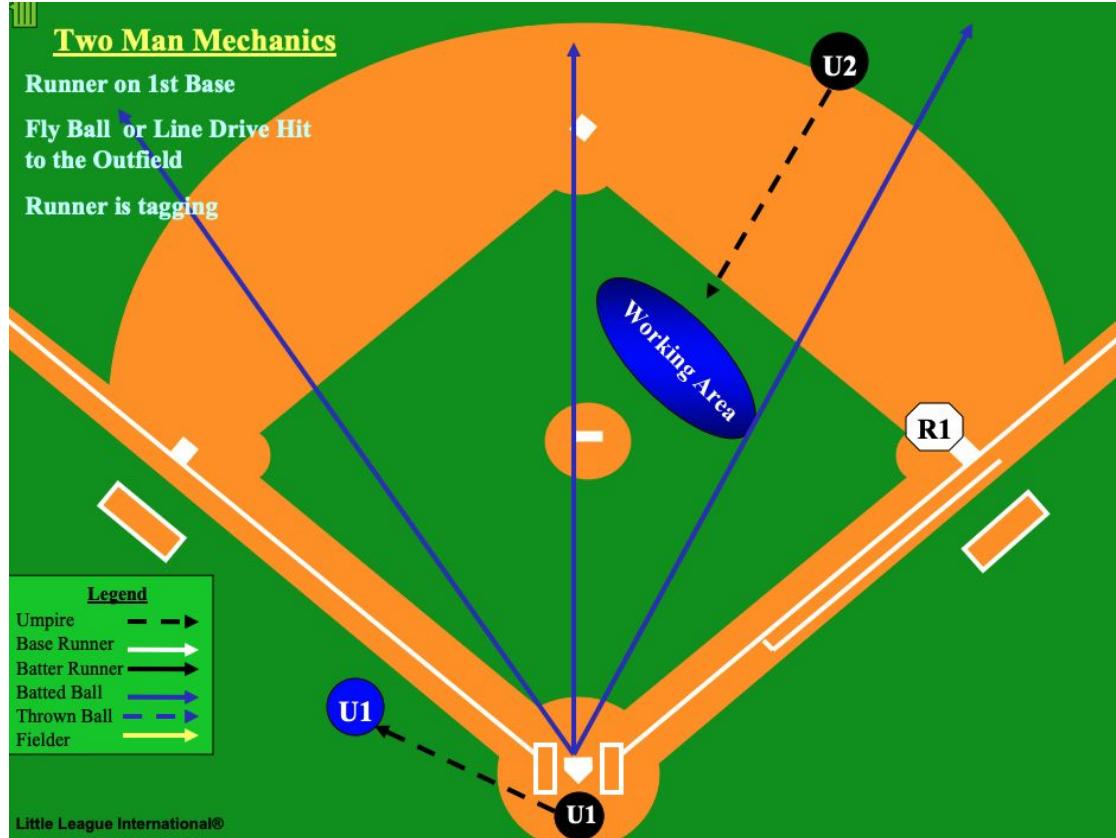
S2: No Runners | Ball to the Outfield



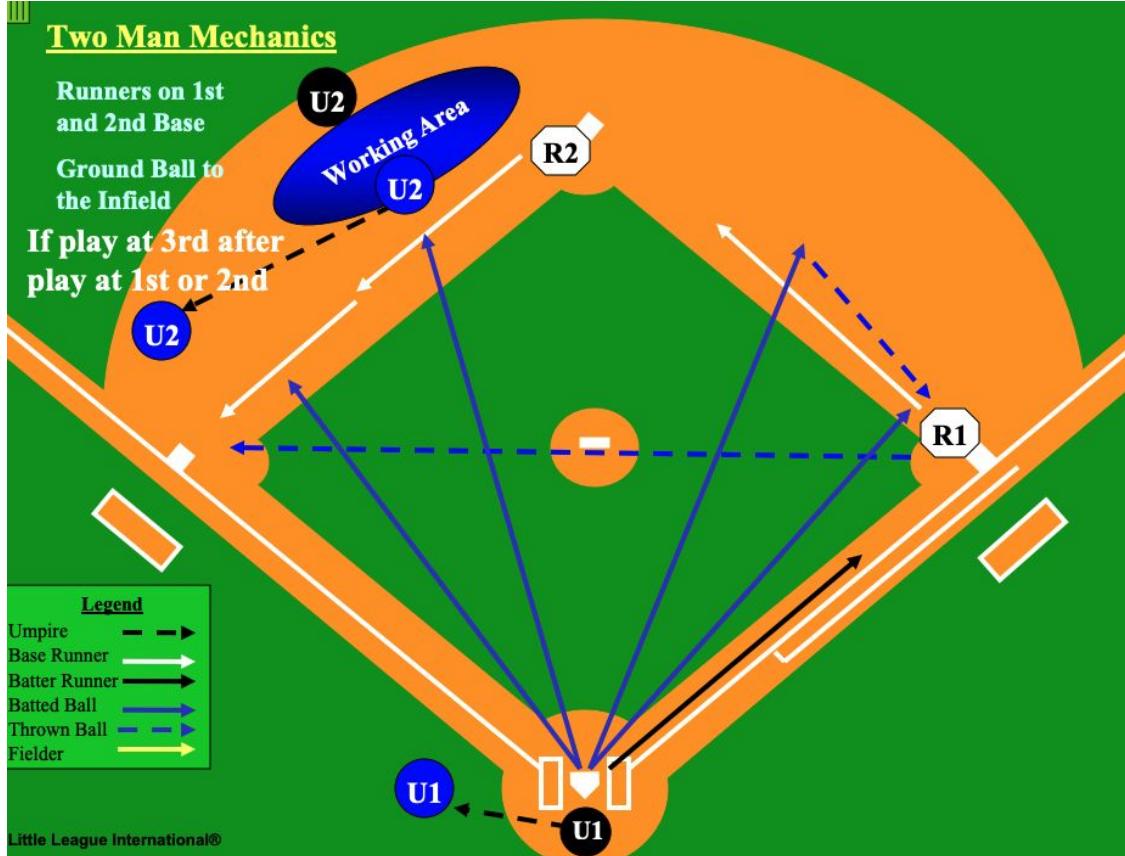
S3: R1 or R1&R3 | Ball to the Infield



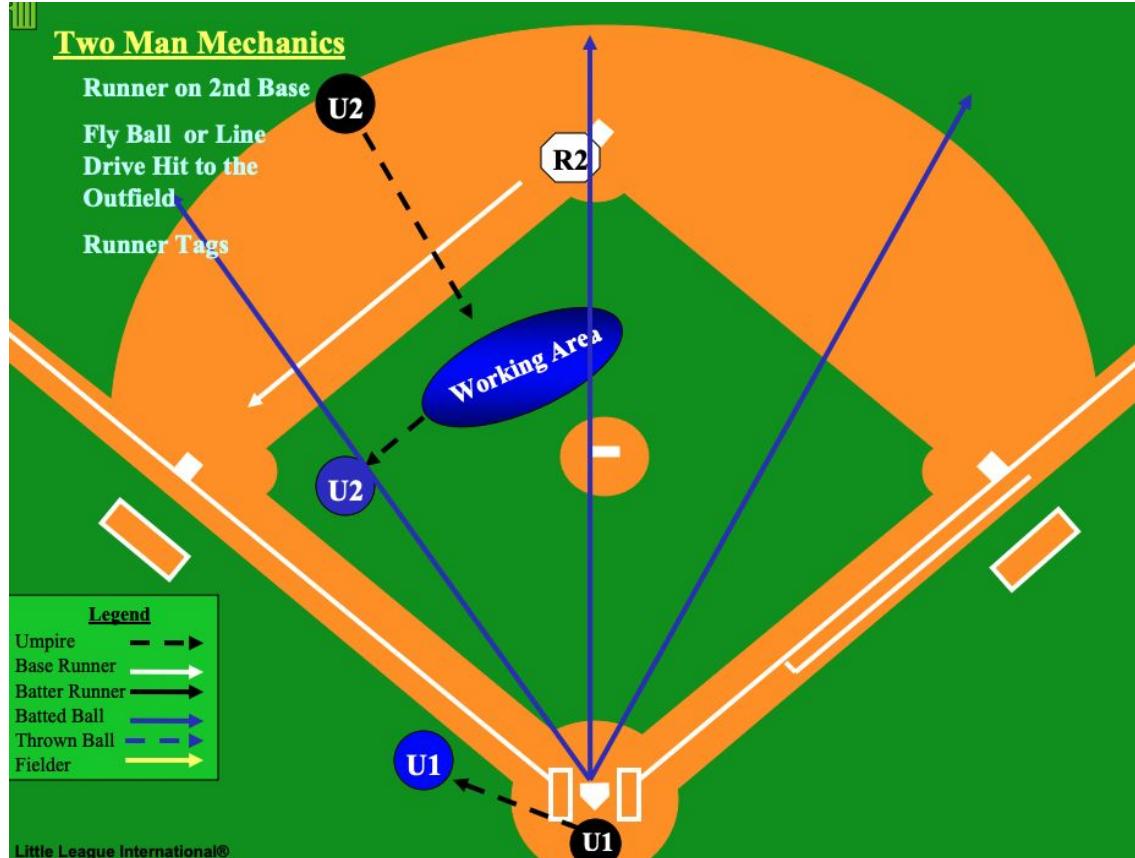
S4: R1 or R1&R3 | Ball to the Outfield



S5: All Other Situations | Ball to the Infield



S6: All Other Situations | Ball to the Outfield



Questions...

Then Let's Head to the Field!