

SUM Three Umpire Mechanics Essentials

SUM is fortunate to have so many opportunities to work 3 umpire mechanics, and the 3 Umpire Basic Mechanics on our website is an excellent place to begin. It has now become routine for all of us to experience this interesting way of officiating our game. The frequency of officiating in a 3 umpire system should showcase our skills and pride should not equate a lack of focus or nonchalant approach. The following are a few points in common language that each of us should consider every time we take the field for a 3 umpire game.

- A pregame discussion is needed before every game, with the plate umpire (P) taking the lead with the 1st Base Umpire (U1) and 3rd Base Umpire (U3). The discussion should involve the Site UIC if possible. Discuss all basic situations. This should happen in the umpire camp **before** your crew walks to the field, not as you are walking to the game.
- Once you have reached the field your approach should be businesslike and professional. Conversations with fans, coaches and players should be minimized. **The plate umpire is the crew chief and should lead the** pregame conference.
- SUM expects U1 and U3 to go out on all fly balls on a fly ball hit to the outfield, both base umpires should track the ball, pause for a moment, and the proper umpire should now trot/run to a position that allows a clear view of the play. The call then, whether a catch or no catch, is up to that umpire.
- When one umpire chases a fly ball, both remaining umpires will revert to a 2 umpire system. This is easily identified when one of the base umpires has turned their back away from the infield and committed to moving toward the potential catch. The umpire who chased does not return to or look into the infield until the ball returns to the infield.
- On a base hit, move to your position quickly. Trot/run depending on the situation.
- U3 is often referred to as “the rabbit”. If you are working as the U3 starting in the “D” position, move like a “rabbit”, with a quickness as you cross into the infield

- U1 needs that same quickness if starting in A and a base hit occurs where it is clear that the hit will be for multiple bases. Cut into the infield, watch the runner touch first, and when you know that the runner will definitely attain 2nd, start moving toward home plate in foul territory for a possible call (the plate umpire should have moved to 3rd for a possible call). If indeed the runner should attempt to go home, U1 should be set up in the right hand batter's box for the call.
- When you are the plate umpire, and the play dictates that you need to move to 3rd for a possible play, **move towards 3rd**. Standing 2-3 steps from home is not moving towards third.
- During the game when an umpire needs to speak to another umpire to ask for or share information, all 3 umpires need to be included. If it is decided that a call shall be reversed, both coaches should be brought together with the umpires for the explanation.
- Between innings get a drink if you wish and then go to your proper pre-determined positions. Do not talk to fans, coaches or players other than a friendly hello. Once again, a single base umpire should not talk to the plate umpire without the other base umpire being present.
- When the game ends, all 3 umpires should exit the field together. Then they should make a point to have a brief post game discussion, preferably with the UIC if they are available. Everyone wants to get dressed and go home but a few short minutes will help clarify game situations and make each umpire a better official for future championship games.

SUM umpires should always strive to respect the game by presenting ourselves in a positive manner on the field, and a three umpire crew can provide each of us with a great experience. Enjoy the moment. Enjoy yourself. Enjoy the game.

THREE UMPIRE MECHANICS

A Quick Study of the Basics

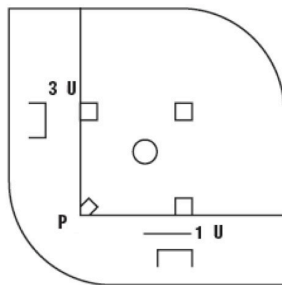
Starting Positions

There are only three different positions you will ever be in at the start of the pitch

1. Standard position
2. Rotated position
3. Counter-rotated position

1. Standard Starting Position

A. Use when there are no runners on



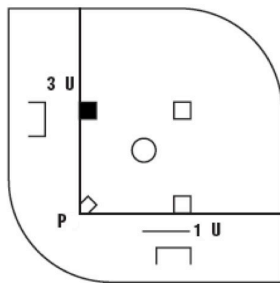
Standard

P: behind the plate.

1U & 3U: 18-20 feet down and close to the line, completely in foul territory in an upright, standing position.

As the pitch is delivered, 1U and 3U take no more than two steps forward, ending in a ready-set position or on the proper push foot (the outside foot).

B. Use when there is a runner on third base only



Standard

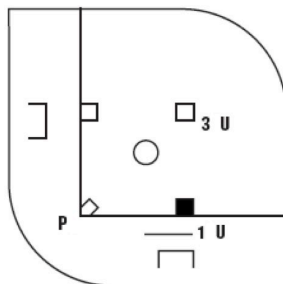
P: behind the plate.

1U: 18-20 feet down and close to the line completely in foul territory in an upright standing position OR in a set position. If standing, as the pitch is delivered, take no more than two steps forward, ending in a ready-set position or on the proper push foot (the outside foot).

3U: in a set position 8-10 feet down the line, completely in foul territory. 3U is facing the plate and may be a step or so perpendicularly off the line.

2. Rotated Starting Position

A. Use when there is a runner on first base only



Rotated

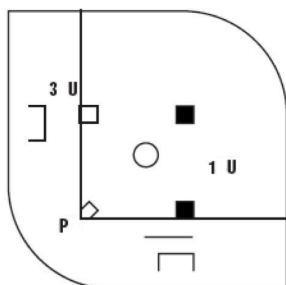
P: behind the plate.

1U: in a set position 8-10 feet down and on the line, completely in foul territory, facing the plate.

3U: facing the plate in a set position 10-12 feet beyond second base on an imaginary line extending straight out towards right-center field from second base

3. Counter-rotated Starting Position

- A.** Use in every situation other than no one on, runner on first only or runner on third only as in 1 and 2 above



Counter-rotated

PU: behind the plate

1U: in a set position somewhere in the 30 feet between 15 feet from first base and 15 feet from second base, usually behind the second baseman, and optimally, no more than 15 feet from the baseline and facing the plate.

3U: facing the plate in a set position 8-12 feet (depending on where the runners are) down and on the line from third base. With a runner on third, 3U may be a few steps perpendicularly off the line but still facing the plate.

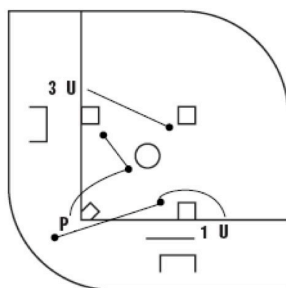
How and When Umpires Rotate

Umpires always rotate in a clockwise motion

1. Full Rotation
2. Partial Rotation

1. Full Rotation

- A.** Use when in the Standard Starting Position with no one on



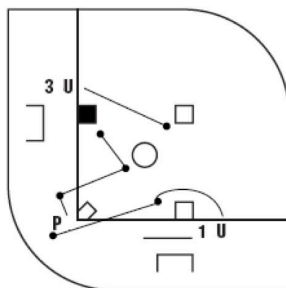
P: move out to in front of the pitching circle and as the runner approaches second base, move to a primary position 8-10 feet from third base.

1U: pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. See the batter-runner touch first base. When the runner advances beyond second base, move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home. Adjust to the play.

3U: move straight into the diamond to a primary position 8-10 feet from second base. When 1U rotates to the plate, 3U is responsible for all plays at first or second.

- B.** Use when in the Standard Starting Position with a runner on third only

AND THAT RUNNER WILL SCORE WITH NO PLAY ON HER/HIM - if there is ANY chance of a play at 3rd, 3U must stay there and 1U must take BR to 2nd.



P: see R3 touch home, then move out to in front of the pitching circle and as the BR approaches second base, move to a primary position 8-10 feet from third base.

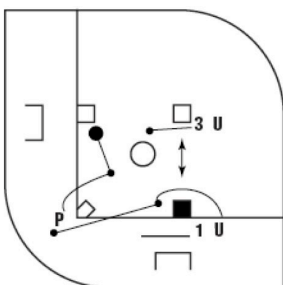
1U: pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. See BR touch first. When the BR advances beyond second base, move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home. Adjust to play.

3U: move straight into the diamond to a primary position 8-10 feet from second base. When 1U rotates to the plate, 3U is responsible for all plays at first or second.

2. Partial Rotation - Only the P and 1U Rotate

A. Use when in the Rotated Starting Position

No umpire is ever part of a rotation if his/her starting position is off the line



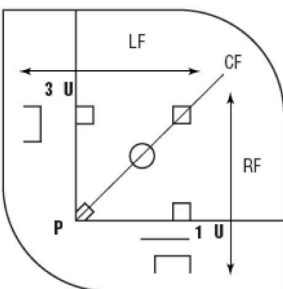
PU: move out towards the pitching circle and as the R1 approaches second base, move to a primary position 8-10 feet from third base.

1U: pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. See BR touch first. When R1 advances beyond second base, move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home. Adjust to play.

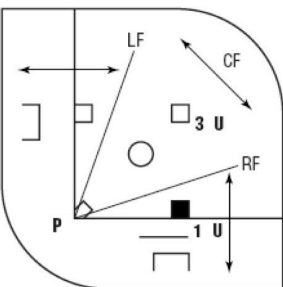
3U: pivot inside the diamond to a primary position 8-10 feet from second base and see R1 touch second. When 1U rotates to the plate, 3U is responsible for all plays at first and second.

Fly Ball Coverage - Chasing

1. From the Standard Starting Position



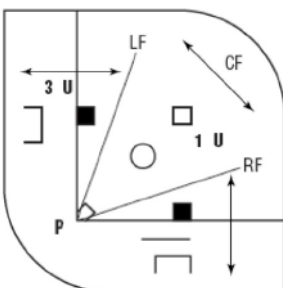
2. From the Rotated Starting Position



Chase parallel to the flight (path) of the ball **UNLESS** you will need to judge fair/foul. If you will need to judge fair/foul, chase down the line.

Always be stopped to see the catch/no catch and to render your judgment.

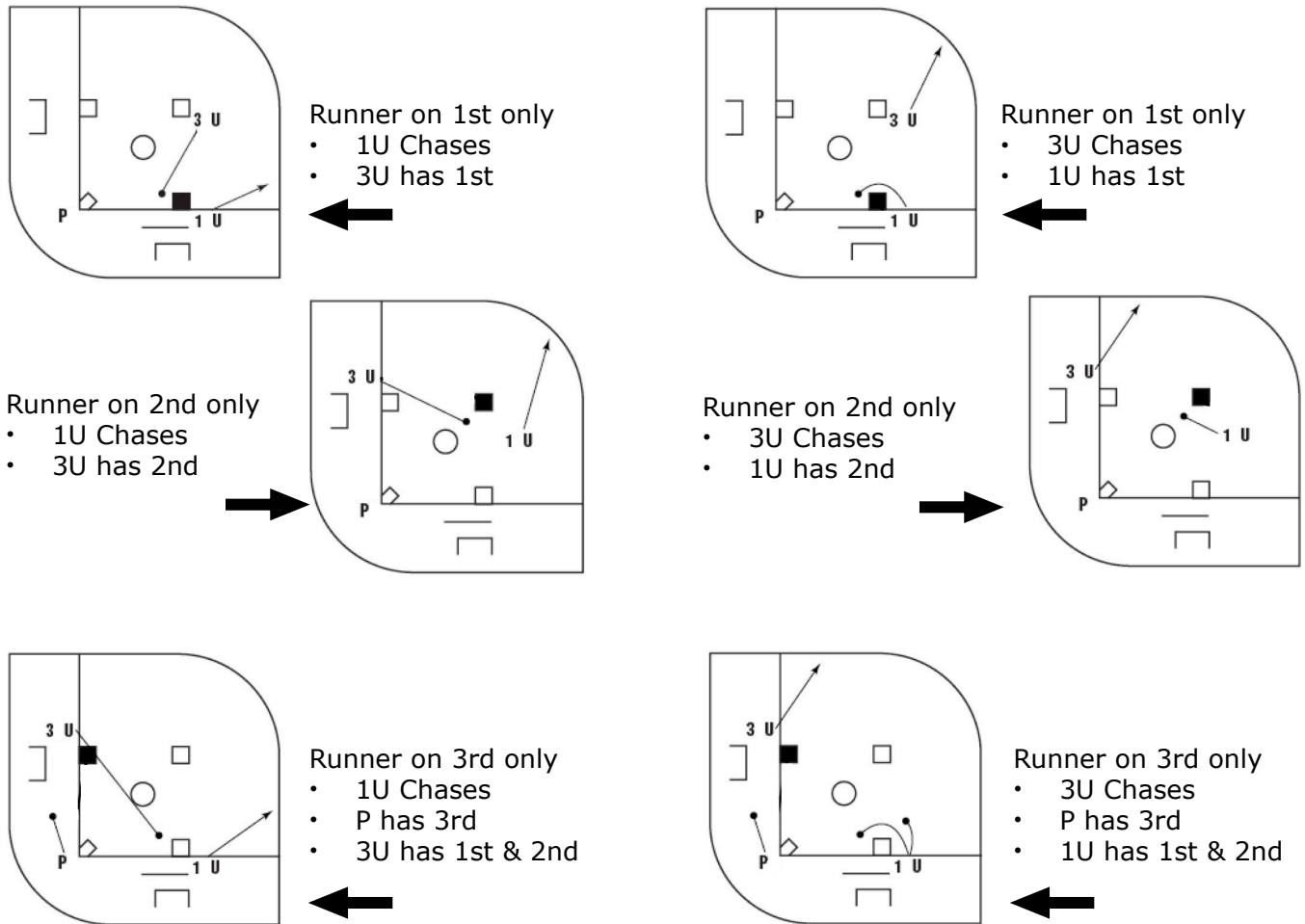
3. From the Counter-rotated Starting Position



When an umpire chases, we are working with two umpires. Usually, but not always, we revert to the two umpire system.

For instance, when 1U chases with no one on, P covers 1st and 3U rotates into 2nd. When the BR advances to 2nd, P goes back to the plate and 3U takes the runner to 3rd if needed.

Tag Up Responsibilities When One Umpire Chases

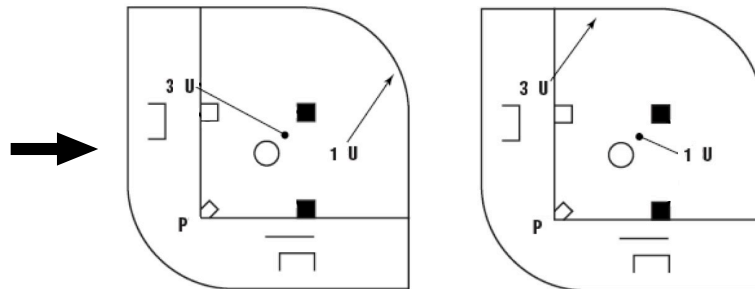


Option A

Runners on 1st & 2nd

Option A:

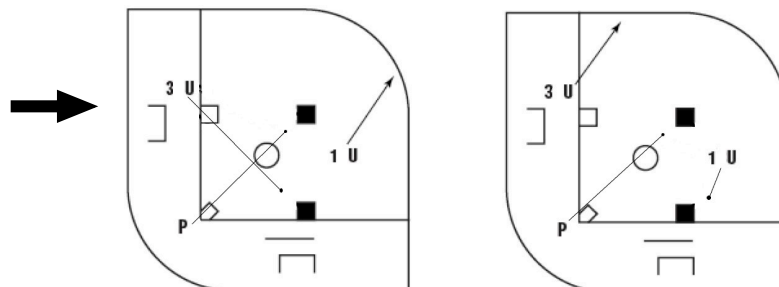
- 1U chases
- 3U has 1st & 2nd
- OR**
- 3U chases
- 1U has 1st & 2nd



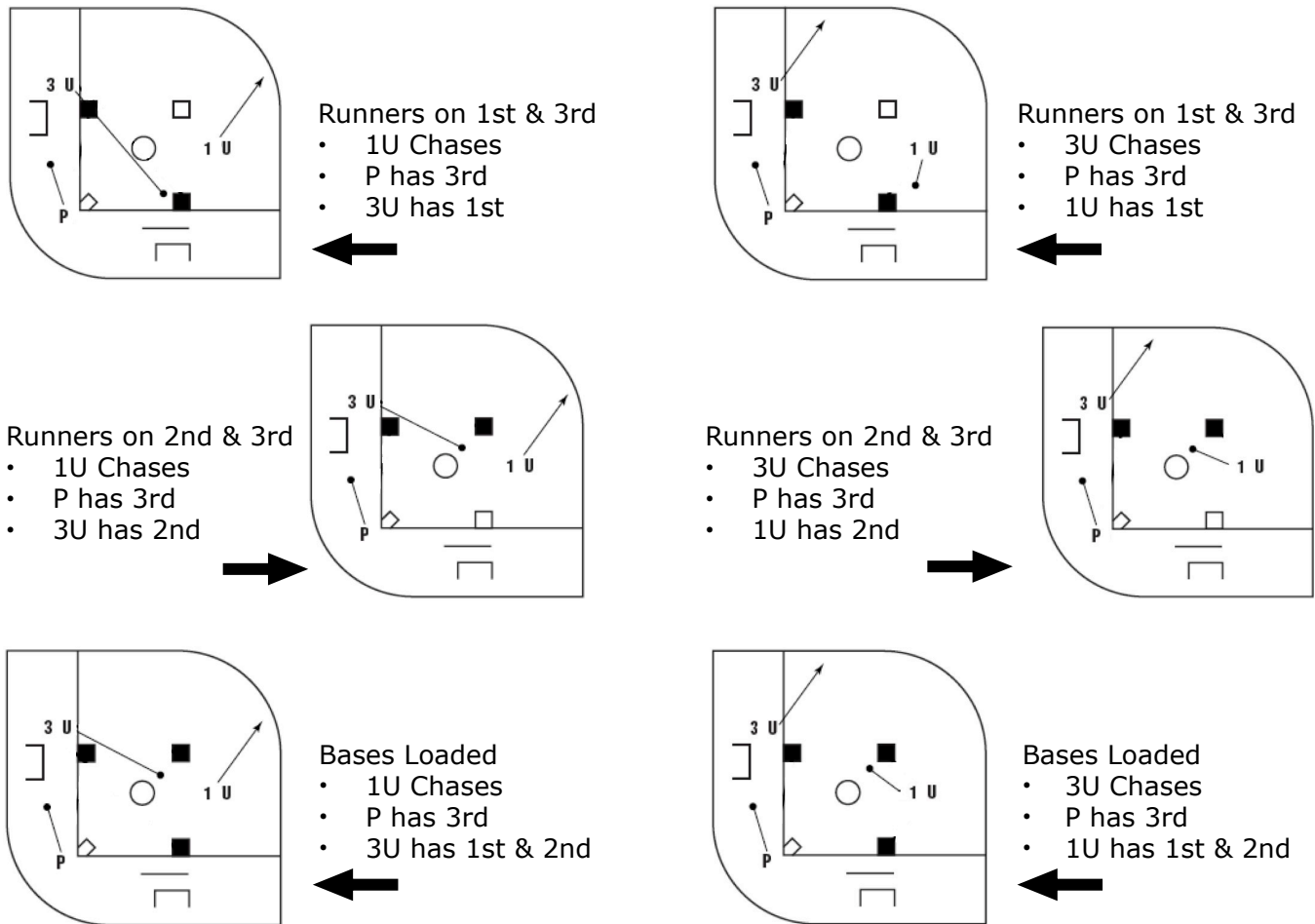
Option B

Option B:

- 1U chases
- P has tag-up at 2nd
- 3U has tag-up at 1st
- OR**
- 3U chases
- P has tag-up at 2nd
- 1U has tag-up at 1st



Tag Up Responsibilities When One Umpire Chases (continued)



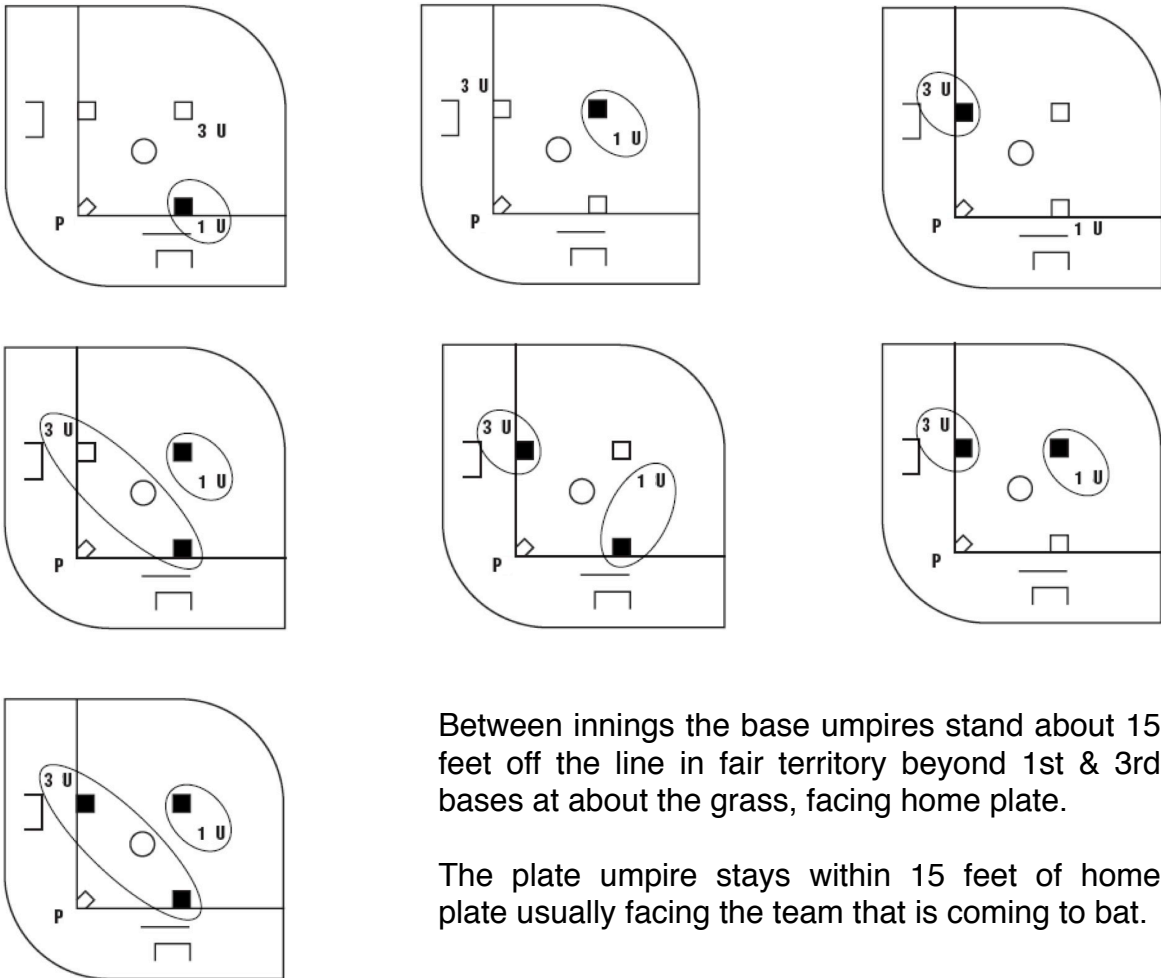
NOTE: 3U NEVER has a tag-up at 3rd if 1U chases

Tag Up Responsibilities When NO Umpire Chases

Runner Situation		Who's Got the Tag?
Runner on First	➡	1U has the tag-up at first
Runner on Second	➡	1U has the tag-up at second
Runner on Third	➡	3U has the tag-up at third
Runners on First and Second	Option A ➡	1U has both tag-ups
Runners on First and Second	Option B ➡	1U has tag-up at first 3U has tag-up at second
Runners on First and Third	➡	1U has tag-up at first 3U has tag-up at third
Runners on Second and Third	➡	1U has tag-up at second 3U has tag-up at third
Bases Loaded	➡	1U has tag-ups at first & second 3U has tag-up at third

NOTE: Plate Umpire has no tag-up responsibilities if no umpire chases

Umpire Responsibilities for Runners Leaving Before the Pitch is Released



Between innings the base umpires stand about 15 feet off the line in fair territory beyond 1st & 3rd bases at about the grass, facing home plate.

The plate umpire stays within 15 feet of home plate usually facing the team that is coming to bat.

The three umpire system is a wonderful system to work. It provides many luxuries and advantages over the two umpire system. There are times, especially at third base, where the umpire may need to take only one or two steps to get the best position.

Learn each position. Use disciplined and controlled movements. Know why you move and make all your moves efficient.

The umpire closest to the interference or obstruction is responsible for calling it.

Before EVERY pitch, remind yourself of and prepare yourself for, what you will do on the next batted ball or the next play. Ask yourself in advance:

- What is my area of fly ball coverage?
- Where do I go if my partner chases?
- Where do I go on a hit to the infield?
- Where do I go on a hit to the outfield?
- Where do I go on a pick-off or steal?