



NOTE: This Pre-Game list is not intended to cover everything that may occur during a game and should be continually updated.

- Notify the crew that pre-game will take place 30-45 minutes before scheduled game time.
 - Could be 1, 2 or 3 umpire crews
- Equipment Check Protocol
- When and where post game will be conducted
- Discuss League / Championship / Game Rules
 - Ground Rules / Run Rules / Tiebreaker / Home Run Limit (SP) / Equipment Check Protocol
- Entering/Exiting the field

Discuss any knowledge of the teams

- Are these teams rivals? Bad blood between them from previous games?
- Any known tendencies for either team? Are they known for hitting up the middle (SP)? Are they known to bunt a lot? Are they aggressive baserunners? Aggressive at attempting pickoffs?

Fly Ball Coverage Key Points

- 3 person - chase fly balls in your coverage area, check depth and location of fielders pre pitch
- U3 key off of U1 (U1 has the first right of refusal)
- Read/Process/React
- Visual and verbal communication with partner, PU communicate going to 2 person

Keys when Chasing

- If the ball is near the line, straddle the line, give ball status when first touched then make the call
- Do not over chase and lose perspective of the ball and foul line/pole
- Everywhere else chase parallel to the flight of the ball
 - NOTE: (Not Directly at the Fielder) - Once you chase, stop, face the fielder see the play then make the call

Keys to No Chase

- Clear base hit (not a fly ball) so no opportunity for a catch
- Balls hit shallow with players playing deep and no opportunity for a catch
- In a 3-umpire system if any doubt - chase! 2-umpire system only chase if possible major issue with PU being able to see the catch/no catch

Plate Coverage

- All bounding balls FAIR/FOUL
- Line drives to the infield
 - Although PU responsible BU can still keep an eye on the play to help if needed.
- Plate umpire fly ball coverage areas (3 person)
- Responsible for all fly balls if no base umpire chases (all systems).
- BU can bracket fly balls in foul territory between home and U1 or U3 ONLY if they have no other responsibilities and PU may have difficulty seeing catch
 - If the fielder is facing PU or fence PU has the call. Visually communicate to eliminate a double call
 - If the fielder is facing U1/U3 base umpire has the call. Visually communicate to eliminate a double call

Discuss umpire responsibilities

- Tag-Up responsibilities
- Fly ball coverage areas
- Base responsibilities
- Runners leaving base too soon on the pitch
- Review mechanics for system being used (2 or 3 umpire)

Movement to next position following conclusion of play

- Discuss PU's view between:
 1. PU holding position until all runners have returned to base and the pitcher has the ball in the circle. Then allow the base umpire(s) to move then PU will return to plate.
 2. Or have the umpire closest to home call time and allow all umpires to rotate at once.
- After this has occurred umpires should hustle to the next position.
- Plate Umpire:
 - Move with purpose
 - Stay alert in case a coach is coming out for a conference or to make a change



Umpire-to-Umpire Signals/Communications

- Infield Fly on/off
 1. With each NEW batter
 2. Initiated by the Plate Umpire
 3. Mirrored by base umpire(s)
- Discuss communications
 - 3 umpire -Visual and verbal communication when chasing discuss what U1 and U3 will say when they chase, PU communication going to 2 person mechanics
 - When rotating, verbalize to partners that you are there and visually check on partners location.
 - 2 umpire- Discuss communication you plan to have during the game (I got 3B, I got the tag at 2B, etc.)

Going for Help

- Check Swings
 - U1-All Right-handed batters.
 - U3-All Left- handed batters.
- Make a call based on information you have then go for help if needed.
 - Pick-off Attempts and all other plays, ONLY go for help if you are missing a piece of the puzzle, if you don't have a clear view don't hesitate to ASK!
 - If you had all the pieces clearly in view, do not appease!

Confrontations

- ALL umpires need to be alert/aware of any discussion between a Coach and another umpire.
- One-on-one discussion only – keep all other Coaches and Players away
- Discuss what each umpires indication is that they are done discussing with a coach so partners know when to step in and help coach away from conference.
- Sportsmanship continues to be a Focus Topic for USA Softball
- It is important that we have a clear understanding of good sportsmanship

Sportsmanship by definition: is a behavior considered fitting for a sportsperson, including observance of the rules of fair play, respect for others, and graciousness in losing.

- A good sport is one who is fair and demonstrates honest behavior (conduct, performance, actions) in sports.
- If there is an ejection, another umpire should step in and ensure the ejected person is escorted off the field.

Angle and Distance

- Positioning on the field is a choice.
- Need to know where you want/need to be, and how to get there to make the call.
- Remember to read the play.
- By moving to the proper primary position first it places the umpire in the best position to see most plays and allows umpires to be able to read the play as it develops and provides more options of positions they can move to, only when needed, allowing them to maintain an unobstructed view of the play.
- Move to the primary position but do not forget to continue to “umpire” and move as the play dictates to maintain an unobstructed view.

WHEN UMPIRES MOVE FROM THE PRIMARY POSITION, THESE FACTORS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED:

- Are you keeping all four elements in front of you?
 - Ball, base, offense and defense?
- Am I 90 degrees from the throw and no closer than 18 feet on a force play?
- Am I 90 degrees from the application of a tag and 10-12 feet from a tag play?
- Will I arrive ahead of the play? Will the ball arrive ahead of the runner? Is the throw online or high/low? Which area of the field is the throw coming from? All these variables change the way a fielder will be able to catch the throw and then apply the tag, which factors into where you need to be in order to have an unobstructed view of that tag.

Post-Game Topics

- What was I working on? Did I improve? How did I make the crew better?
- What went right as a crew?
- What went wrong as a crew?
- What do I need to take from this game to my next game? Good things to keep doing and items I can improve on.
- Controversial plays
- Game Management