



Avoid Collisions on the Field

Whether between teammates or opposing players, baseball and softball are not contact sports. Make sure everyone understands who should make the play, and who should make way, to avoid collisions between players.

Call the Ball

Defensive players should be trained early to “call the ball” when going for a catch. Don’t have two players collide because neither knew the other was trying to make the play. Fielders should be taught which player has priority for fly balls on the various areas of the field, unless called off by another player (i.e., on the third base side of the diamond, the shortstop has priority for fly balls, while on the first base side, the second baseman has priority, and outfielders generally should give ground to the center fielder).

Don’t Obstruct Base Paths for Runners or Interfere with Fielders

Base runners and fielders: Only a player with the ball, or making a play on a batted ball should be in the base paths. Avoid injuries on the base paths by making it clear to offensive players that runners must slide or avoid a fielder **with the ball** and avoid a fielder making a play on a batted ball. For defensive players, tell them that fielders **without the ball** must vacate the base paths for runners.

Rule 7.08: “Any runner is out when – (a)(3) the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag; . . . (b) intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball (**NOTE:** A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a ball is out whether it was intentional or not).”

Rule 7.09: “It is interference by a batter or runner when – (f) the runner fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball . . .”

2.00 – Definition of Terms

OBSTRUCTION is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. A fake tag is considered obstruction. (**NOTE:** Obstruction shall be called on a defensive player who blocks off a base, base line or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball.)

A fielder without the ball should make way for the advancing base runner; a runner seeing a fielder with the ball must slide or avoid. Don’t allow collisions on the base paths from overly-aggressive play.