

Four Tips for One-Umpire Mechanics

No runners on base.

On a ground ball in the infield, hustle out from behind the plate and start up the first-base line inside the diamond about six feet off the line. Be stationary when you make the call and be ready to move toward the center of the diamond if there is an overthrow. If the ball goes through the infield for a base hit, move toward the pitcher's plate. If the possibility of extra bases exists, move with the runner but keep an eye on the ball. On fly balls, follow the same procedure except you must get an angle if the possibility of a trap exists. On balls hit down the line, move down the line until you make your ruling and then hustle to be in position for a play on the batter-runner. If the play on the batter-runner is going to be made at the plate, make your call from inside the diamond on the first-base side. If the throw is coming from right field, move about six feet directly in front of the plate and let the throw go by, then move into position to make the ruling.

Runner on first base.

On a ground ball in the infield, hustle out just to the left of the pitcher's plate, being prepared to move in the direction of the throw and make any ruling necessary. Follow the previously mentioned procedures for base hits, fly balls, balls hit down the line and plays at the plate.

Runners on first and second.

On a fly ball or ground ball in the infield, hustle out to the pitcher's circle. Naturally, on a ball hit down either line, you will have to make your fair/foul ruling and then move to get the best angle on any play that follows. On a base hit where there is a strong possibility of a play at the plate, move halfway up the third-base line in foul territory. If the throw goes home, hustle back behind the plate and make your ruling from a position behind the plate based on where the throw is coming from. That will normally be one of the baselines extended. If no play is being made at the plate, move into the diamond and hustle into position to get your best angle for any play on the bases.

Bases loaded.

On any hit ball, move up the third-base line in foul territory. Be careful not to slow down or run into the runner advancing home. Follow the above procedures for fly balls, balls hit down the line and whenever there is a strong possibility for a play at the plate. If no play is being made at the plate, move into the diamond and hustle into position to get your best angle for any play on the bases.