

ON THE BALL

(A guide to the Laws of Rounders) (updated February 2015)

1. A match should start at the appointed time. Any incomplete team with at least six players, should commence play. If they refuse, the actual starting time must be noted on the match indicating which team was at fault. Should a team be short of players at the start of play, an eligible player will be allowed to play at any time, provided the referee is informed of the intention before the start of the match, and advised when an additional player arrives. Temporary players are not allowed. Substitute players are only allowed in the event of injury, or at the half-time interval. When the visiting team is 5 or more minutes late, the home team gets the choice to bat or field first.

3. In inclement weather, three, four, or more, balls may be necessary. The referee will decide what is fair to both teams. Remember, a clean yellow/green ball is easier to see in fading light.

4. Spot checks on bats aren't a bad idea, but remember the law only covers the blade length and width dimensions - not the weight and thickness. Weighting of bats will cost teams two league points or a Cup disqualification.

5. SAFETY is the very practical reason for this law. Poles should be clean, and painted for better visibility. Short poles increase the risk of injury. A 5 foot (1.5m) pole might only be 3'-9" (1.15m) once it's in the ground! While on the subject of safety, common sense should be used when there is thunder and lightning around.

6/7/8. These suggestions for putting down the pitch should be useful. Set down the bowling tapes, then the batting tapes, square and in line, 7 yards (6.4m) in front of them, remembering the measurements reach from the inside of both sets of tapes. The measuring tape is useful for checking the two areas are in line.

.....use measuring tape to get a straight line.....



Imperial and metric measurements are here and in Laws.

Set first base 12 yards (11m) from the centre of the inside edge of the front batting tape, in line with the front of the bowling tape.

If you've done everything else right, the pole will be "about" 9 - 3/4 yards from the bowling tape.

Repeat this procedure to set fourth base.

Now measure 12 yards (11m) to the approximate position of second base and confirm this position by measuring 6 yards (5.5m) back from the centre line of the pitch (refer to diagram).

Finally, measure 12 yards (11m) from both second and fourth bases to find the correct position of third base.

10. The bowler may enter the bowling pitch from either side or the back and must **pause** before bowling the ball **underhand**. The bowler's feet must be clear of the tape at all times. The ball must be delivered **before the bowler leaves the bowling pitch**. Touching the tape before releasing the ball, or releasing the ball after leaving the bowling pitch, constitutes a bad ball. It is not possible to measure a "pause". Everything depends on the individual bowler's approach, but perhaps it might be simply described as an "interruption" in an otherwise continuous movement. If the trailing foot touches the other foot and changes direction (e.g. sideways, touch, forward), then the bowler will have paused. For the ball to be correctly bowled "underhand", the important factor to remember is, when the ball is released by the bowler, the back of the hand must be facing the ground.

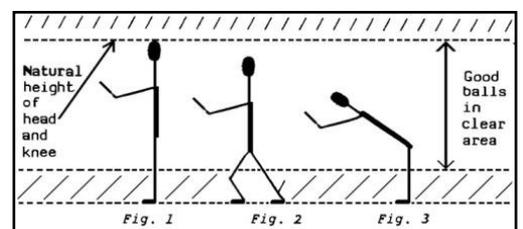
11. There must be a backstop who must stay in position until the bowler has completed her delivery.

12. c) The intention or "spirit" of this law is to prevent the free foot moving across the tape, in front or behind, to give the advantage of a real good swing at the ball.

d) Placing the free foot forward of the front tape, or backward of the back tape, doesn't give so much advantage and is very difficult for the referee to judge. **This would not incur a penalty.**

13. The penalty for a baulk is one run to the batting side, to be recorded separately in the score book. If the baulk is created unintentionally, for example by the actions of the batter, it would be unfair to penalise the bowler. In such circumstances, the bowler should be asked to start again.

14. The sketch indicates in a simple form, what can happen when a batter takes up position. Note how both the head and the knee have dropped in Fig. 2 which means that a "bad" ball could actually pass above the knee. In Figs. 2 & 3, a ball could be above the head and still be "good". In practice, the referee will be faced with a combination of Figs. 2 & 3. The referee will watch as the batter walks in to bat and try to judge her natural height against the background. If in doubt, she may be asked to stand up straight to give the referee a chance to judge.



18. If it becomes apparent the batters have gone out of order, the referee should check the scorers have recorded the correct score (or at least agree the total) and tell the batters to sort themselves out next time round.

19. A batter is out (caught) if a fielder holds the ball, after it has come off the bat, hand or forearm, before it touches the ground.

The catch is considered GOOD if :-

- 1) the ball is hugged to the fielder's body,
- 2) the ball is caught off any player, the referee or a Base pole.

The catch is NOT GOOD if :-

- 1) the ball lodges in headgear e.g. anorak hoods,
- 2) the ball has struck any other obstruction, e.g. scorers or their fittings, a tree, building, spectator or a batter who is already out,
- 3) the ball touches the floor whilst held by the hand.

NO RUN IS SCORED IF THE BATTER IS CAUGHT OUT.

Minimise obstructions by ensuring clothing and bags be put directly behind the scorers, or preferably, left well away from the playing area.

20. The ball need not leave the fielder's hand. If the referee sees the ball touch any part of the batter she will be given "out". A runner would not be out if she's hit by a ball coming directly off her team-mate's bat. If the ball is deflected - accidentally or otherwise - onto the runner by a fielder, the runner would be given out.

A batter overrunning a base by 12 yards (11m) due to slippery conditions, should not be confused with one who is dodging, which is a deliberate attempt to avoid a fielder. Referees have to decide whether or not a player is making an attempt to stop at a base. Players can create a wrong impression, but everything depends on what the referee believe the intention was.

21. When a fielder who touches the base with her hand that doesn't count. The fielder has to touch the base first with the ball for the batter to be given out. When the batter and fielder touch the base simultaneously, the batter is not out.

22. If two batters are on a base, the one in front can be hit out. Very often, in the confusion, both batters leave the base, in which case they are both liable to be hit.

24. If a batter misses a base, the score will only count to the previous base touched. "No score" would be given if she missed first base, "one" if she touched first but missed second, and so on, but the referee should wait until the batter has "stopped" before giving the score. The referee should not do anything else to tell the players what happened; they should work it out for themselves. The batter will remain liable to be hit unless she returns to the base missed, or the bowler is prepared to bowl.

25. The definition of when a bowler is READY to bowl shall be deemed to be the point at which she normally commences the approach to the bowling square. This will be different for different styles of bowlers. Dispute arises when a bowler, having been ready to bowl, then attempts to hit a batter out who is not touching the base. In this instance the batter must not be given out, as the bowler was ready to bowl. Similarly, a batter cannot run on to clear bases once the bowler is ready to bowl. If this happens, she must be brought back.

27. Spectators should be kept well out of the field of play. However, obstruction by a spectator merits a quiet word from the referee, and in the case of deliberate obstruction, a word with the appropriate captain. If a dog interferes when the game is in progress, the referee should try to be fair to both teams and not allow the situation to give an advantage to either side. The decision should be announced firmly with the referee having the option of re-starting the game with the same batter.

29. What you have to remember on this "controversial" law is:

- 1) no batter can obstruct if the ball hits the bat, forearm or hand holding the bat (i.e. a scoring shot), or the upper part of the arm holding the bat.
- 2) no batter can obstruct a bad ball.

Both laws referring to "verbal" obstruction (28 & 29) are aimed at players who deliberately distract opponents by shouting. Although not a serious problem, it does go on.

33. Scorers have a difficult job. They should not be distracted by players or spectators standing close to them. However, everybody has to learn somewhere, so make sure the trainee scorer has every opportunity to acquire knowledge. The scorers must not convey the score to anyone other than the referee. Scorers should continually cross check their books to avoid errors.

Players and spectators aren't forbidden to keep their own score, but this is strictly unofficial.

36. Visiting teams must adhere to the footwear restrictions imposed on home team grounds when the pitch is deemed playable by the Referee.