

READY RECKONER / UMPIRING GUIDELINES

All league umpires must know and remember this most important rule in cricket:

“When you are in doubt, the batsman is not out, benefit of doubt to the batsman”

- 1. Never rush a decision!** If after you have thoroughly considered all the reasons and you are 100% certain, ONLY then make the decision.
- 2. Be consistent with your calls:** Make sure that whatever calls you make are consistent throughout the game. For example, we use cones/flags as markers to call wides (measured as one bat from the middle stump). If you are going to call a ball that goes over the cone/flag as a wide ball, then consistently call it as such throughout the game. Trust me....the fielding side will catch on pretty quickly.
- 3. If in doubt, consult:** The umpire at the striker's end (square leg umpire) is there to help you.
- 4. Altering Decisions:** We are human. We make mistakes. The Laws makes it quite clear that an umpire may change his decision. This would happen only in very unusual circumstances and the Law does say that alterations must be made promptly. The umpire should not be influenced by the reactions of players to his decision. The changing of a decision should only result from the umpire's realization that, from the events as he saw them, he has made an error. The captain of the fielding side has the right to seek permission of the umpire to withdraw an appeal. Provided the outgoing batsman has not left the playing area the umpire can, if he sees fit, cancel his decision and recall the batsman.
- 5. Jurisdiction of Calls or Who Calls What:** **The striker's end umpire (umpire at square leg) has only three decisions on which he has absolute ruling powers on: (i) Run out at his end (ii) Stumped and (iii) Hit wicket. That doesn't mean he does not have a say on the other decisions. Generally all other decisions are made by the bowler's end umpire. But the striker's end umpire can also call**

NO-BALL the bowler for throwing or chucking and for height. Either umpire, on their own, can consult with his colleague to achieve a correct decision or to revoke a previous decision. Nobody is superior and nobody over rules. Consulting each other and arriving at a correct decision is the right thing to do!

- 6. Last but not the least, just do your best!** Nobody is going to hold you responsible. You have the final say in the ground and for the betterment of our league give decisions to the best of your ability.

BEFORE THE GAME:

The umpires who show up for neutral umpiring:

1. Must have read and make themselves well aware of the league rules.
2. They must carry a copy of this ready reckoner.
3. Arrive at the ground no later than 20 minutes before the scheduled time to start.
4. Verify if the ground is playable. The umpires have to use their discretion to decide if the playing conditions are safe. They should not get pressurized by the players or the captains. If the conditions are unplayable either due to rains or any other condition, OR if the game is interrupted by any un-foreseen circumstance, the Umpires can make the call to “call-off” the game, and let the teams share points equally. Please refer to the RULEBOOK for further clarification. The umpires could re-schedule the match to be played at a later time, on the same day OR an alternate venue if it is workable from a condition and time perspective. Any decisions taken by the umpires in this regard will be final.
5. Make sure that the boundaries are marked and ascertain how any obstacles in the field of play will be dealt with. If the obstacles cannot be moved, e.g. a post or a fence etc, the umpires must be sure that the captains agree as to whether or not such obstacles are to be regarded as part of the field of play and how runs/outs will be scored if the ball strikes or goes over those obstacles.
6. Make sure that the pitch length is at 22 yards; that the stumps (bails) are properly positioned, and the creases correctly and visibly marked.

7. Agree and discuss with the captains any special rules and/or conditions which apply to the match.
8. Umpires must check whether each player is registered in the site. He can do so by requesting for a list of registered players from the captains, and verifying each player's name against a photo ID. Alternately, the umpires can carry a list of registered players of both teams, by themselves.
9. Check that a toss for innings has been made no later than 15 minutes before the start of play. The umpires do not have to supervise the toss but simply check that it has been made.
10. Collect the ball from the fielding captain and ensure that it is the league approved ball.
11. Five minutes before play is due to start the umpires should tell both captains the time and take the field.
12. Umpires should strictly impose the rules for START time, according to the RULES Book.
13. In case of any disputes/controversies the umpires should try to make an objective decision. Under the rare situation, where the dispute/controversy cannot be resolved, the umpires should send a written report to EC before the end of the day on the incident/match.

PRE-GAME PREPARATION:

1. Both playing teams shall be **equally** responsible for preparing the pitch.

NOMINATIONS & TOSS:

1. Both the teams will have to exchange the match nominations (Playing XI and 12th man if available) before the toss. The toss should take place 15 minutes before the agreed upon match start time. If a captain is not available for the toss a deputy can be used as long as he is one of the nominated players. Intro session of players by the respective captains to the opponent team/captain, followed by exchanging the list of their playing 11.

2. For the toss to take place, a minimum of 8 (EIGHT) players from each team should be available at the grounds. The players have to be inside the boundary line and excuses like they are sitting in their cars, they are in the parking lot, they are bringing water, they went to get coffee, they went to bathroom etc. are not valid. If the team does not have the required 8 players at the scheduled toss time they automatically LOSE THE TOSS to the other team.
3. At the agreed upon match starting time the team not ready to play (i.e. do not have at least 8 players) shall lose 1 (ONE) over for every 5 (FIVE) minutes from their allotment of over's up to a maximum reduction of 4 over's. The team that is ready to play, with a minimum complement of 8 players, at the agreed upon match starting time shall be made avail of the entire allotment of over's.
4. A decision to "call-off" the match will be made by the neutral umpires at the ground, if after 45 minutes from the agreed upon start time, one of the teams is not present on the field with at least 8 (EIGHT) players. The umpires can consider it as a FORFEIT of the match, and award full points to the team present with at least 8 (EIGHT) players.

USE OF PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:

Hand warmers, oven mitts, baseball mitts and such other hand coverings are NOT to be substituted as wicket-keeping gloves and are not deemed acceptable as protective gear for a wicket-keeper in the field of play.

GROUND DIMENSIONS:

The boundary marking should not be less than 45 yards or 135 feet (typically can be measured by 45 normal steps) or more than 60 yards or 180 feet (typically can be measured by 60 normal steps) from the center of the pitch, to be set by the home team, visiting team and umpire can verify by taking 60 steps. Depending on ground conditions umpires should use maximum available distance to set boundary between 45 to 60 yards.

PITCH DIMENSIONS:

Area of Pitch: All league games will use a pitch that measures 22 yards or 20.12 meters or 66 feet in length. Each team is strongly recommended to carry a tape measure that will allow for the measurement of at least 22 yards.

Use of Matting: NJSBCL allows usage of proper cricket mats, both half and full sized. The home team defines whether a mat is used for their ground, as a default for the season. This cannot be selectively defined match to match. Visiting team does not have an option of using mat or not.

OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE FIELD OF PLAY:

If there are any obstructions that are in the field of play (inside the boundary line) the rules for such obstructions and interferences have to be agreed upon before the toss between the two captains and the umpires. As a general rule balls deflecting off in-field obstructions shall keep the ball in play unless “Declared Runs” have been agreed upon before the match. No catch shall be allowed off such obstructions.

If a tree or any other obstruction is located outside the boundary line but overhangs onto the playing area, any contact with the tree or obstruction by the ball or the fielder with the ball shall constitute the ball to be in contact with the boundary and shall be declared as a FOUR or a SIX, as the case may be.

CREASES, STUMPS & WIDE MARKERS:

Creases: The home team will have to clearly demarcate the bowling and popping creases on both sides of the wicket. The bowling crease shall be the line through the centers of the three stumps at that end. The creases will have to be at least 12 feet wide. The popping crease has to be 4 feet in front and parallel to the bowling crease. A measure of a bat + handle length will be accepted for batting crease in absence of tape measure

Stumps: Three stumps shall be placed at each end and be not more than 28 inches in height off the ground and 28.5 inches with the bails. The three stumps have to be 9 inches wide. It is strongly recommended to have bails at both ends to avoid any controversies during the match. If conditions dictate the bails to be removed, then they need to be removed at both ends. If sufficient bails are not available between the two teams, then the preference is to have them at the batting end.

Wide Markers: Markers that will be used for the calling of wide balls shall be placed at one bat length from the **middle** stump.

TAMPERING WITH THE BALL:

Excessive and unnecessary rolling of a new ball before and right after the match begins, either to wear-out the fur or to absorb moisture and increasing the ball weight is not allowed. Any other form of BALL tampering to change the characteristics of the ball is not allowed. Umpires shall have the right to change the ball in such circumstances, either on their own, or as a result of a valid objection raised by the batsmen or batting team captain.

RESTRICTIONS ON THE PLACEMENT OF FIELDERS:

There will be no field restrictions enforced.

WICKET KEEPER & FIELDER MOVEMENT:

Neither the wicket keeper nor a fielder can move significantly (described as NOT more than 2 steps) after the batsman has taken his stance, which is considered to be a distraction.

For fielders, only regular “taking a start” type of forward movement is allowed. The fielder is not allowed to move significantly such that a deep square leg cannot become a square leg. Same holds good for sideways movement also such that a deep square leg cannot become a deep mid-wicket. A fielder cannot move backwards once the batsman has taken a stance.

A wicket-keeper cannot come close to the stump if he is at a significant distance from the stumps, after the batsman has taken his stance and before the ball passes the batsman. The wicket keeper can make all the movement he needs before the batsman has taken a stance and he does not have to inform the strikers-end umpire.

If any of these are not met then either Umpire could call and signal a DEAD BALL on their own or upon an objection raised by the batsmen. At the first instance, during the inning, the umpire shall give a warning to the fielding side. For repeat violations, the umpires shall call and signal a No ball. All decisions of Umpires are final.

MODES OF DISMISSAL:

In cricket laws there are 10 modes of dismissals as listed below. In our league we will follow the first 9 modes of dismissal only.

1. Bowled
2. Caught
3. Stumped
4. Run-out
5. Hit-Wicket: If the batsman, while the ball is in play, with his bat or by his person puts down his wicket while preparing to receive or in receiving a delivery or while immediately setting off for his first run,
6. Obstruction of Field: Either batsmen is out if he willfully obstructs or distracts the opposing side by word or action. The striker is out if the obstruction is caused by either batsmen while a catch is being made...
7. Hit the Ball Twice: If the batsman intentionally hits the ball again, while it is still in play, with his bat or person except for the purpose of protecting his wicket.
8. Handled the Ball: Either batsman is out if he willfully touches the ball with his hand or hands not holding the bat without the consent of the fielding side.
9. Timed-Out: The incoming batsman must be in position to take his guard or for his partner to be ready to receive the next ball within 3 minutes of a fall of the previous wicket.

10. LBW: We do not consider lbws in our league matches. So, a batsman should never be ruled out on account of lbw.

RUN OUT BY “MANKED”:

When the batsman at the non-striker’s end has backed up too far out of his crease and the bowler is in his run-up (but before having entered his delivery stride) removes the bails with the batsman out of his crease, the batsman is said to have been "Mankeded" and the umpire shall give him out run-out. A bowler has to warn the batsman at least once before running him out in this way.

A bowler cannot run out a non-striker once he has entered his delivery stride. The delivery stride is defined as the stride in the course of which the delivery swing is made which starts when the bowler's back foot lands and ends when the front foot lands in the same stride. A bowler has to warn the batsman at least once before running him out in this way.

In simple terms, a bowler cannot run-out the non-striker once he has started to swing his arm to bowl. From the non-striker's perspective stay within the crease until the bowler starts his swing.

DEAD BALL:

A DEAD BALL call supersedes any other calls for wide, bowled, stumped, caught etc. In our league the most common occasions when a dead ball shall be called and signaled by either umpire, if necessary, are listed below:

1. The ball becomes dead when,
2. it finally settles in the keepers hands
3. a boundary is scored
4. a batsman is dismissed
5. is trapped in equipment or clothing of batsman
6. If a player or umpire is injured

7. umpire calls an over
8. umpires need to consult with each other or the players
9. In certain grounds half of the pitch may have grass/uneven patch. In such circumstances, the two captains in mutual agreement with the umpires can formulate a rule for dead ball for whenever a ball pitches on the green grass/rough patch. Such agreements have to be made prior to the toss/match.
10. Ball pitches more than once before reaching batting crease

NO-BALLS:

(A) Mode of Delivery: (a) the umpire shall find out whether the bowler intends to bowl right-handed or left-handed, over or round the wicket, and then inform the striker. It is unfair if the bowler fails to notify the umpire of a change in his mode of delivery. In this case the umpire shall call and signal NO-BALL. (b) Underarm bowling shall not be permitted.

NOTE: It is the umpire's responsibility to find out what the bowlers intends to do at the start of a spell and then it is the bowler's responsibility to inform of any changes during a spell.

(B) Fair Delivery - The Feet: For a delivery to be fair in respect of the feet, in the delivery stride the bowler's front foot must land with some part of the foot, whether grounded or raised, **behind** the popping crease. If the bowler delivers a ball from behind the umpire it will be called a NO-BALL. **Reason** - Because the umpire is unable to ascertain if the bowler's action is legitimate.

The ball does not become dead at the call of NO-BALL, but batsmen can only be dismissed from such a ball by Run Out, Hitting the ball twice, Handling the ball, or Obstructing the field.

If either of the neutral umpires feels that the bowler is throwing/chucking the ball, he can call a NO-BALL. Giving a warning is totally up to the umpires discretion, and not mandatory.

(C) Height: If in the judgment of the neutral umpires the ball has passed or would have passed over the batsman's shoulder if he were in his normal batting stance, then either of the two umpires shall call and signal a NO-BALL. NOTE: If the strikers-end umpire is from the batting team then the neutral umpire, always at bowlers-end in such cases, can over-rule the decision. But in case of 2 neutral umpires, NO OVER RULING! A request here for the 2 neutral umpires – Please respect each others decision and please consult each other before a decision, esp. in case of a 50/50 doubtful situation. ALWAYS TO REMEMBER, BATSMAN GETS THE BENEFIT OF DOUBT! ALSO AN UMPIRE CAN RECALL/CHANGE HIS DECISION IF UPON CONSULTATION WITH HIS COLLEAGUE FEELS HE MAY HAVE MADE A MIS-JUDGEMENT/ERROR.

(D) Full Tosses Above the Waist: If in the judgment of either umpire the ball without pitching (without touching the ground), has passed over the batsman's waist, when the batsman is in his normal batting stance, and inside the crease, then either umpire shall call and signal a NO-BALL. NOTE: If the strikers-end umpire is from the batting team then the neutral umpire, always at bowlers-end in such cases, can over-rule the decision.

Additionally the bowler will be given a warning for dangerous bowling if the ball was directed at the batsman's body. These types of deliveries can potentially injure the batsman. Hence, if 2 such deliveries which are directed at the batsman's body are bowled by a bowler, the umpire will stop the bowler from bowling further in the match. If the over is not complete, a different bowler has to complete the over. This bowler should not have bowled the previous over, and will not be allowed to bowl the next over. The number of balls bowled by the new bowler, will be credited to him, and hence will count towards his quota of over's.

NOTE: Since in NJSBCL it is very difficult to ascertain the speed of the ball being bowled accurately, no differentiation will be made between fast and slow balls.

(E) Free-Hit Following a Foot-Fault NO-BALL: The delivery following a NO-BALL called for a foot fault shall be a free hit for whichever batsman is facing it. The umpires will signal a free hit by (after the normal NO-BALL signal) extending one arm straight upwards and moving it in a circular motion.

If the delivery for the free hit is not a legitimate delivery (any kind of no ball or a wide ball), then the next delivery will become a free hit for whichever batsman is facing it. Field changes are not permitted for free hit deliveries unless there is a change of striker. A free hit ball is counted towards the number of balls of an over.

For any free hit, the striker can be dismissed only under the circumstances that apply for a no ball, even if the delivery for the free hit is called wide ball. During a free hit, a batsman can be given OUT only by Run out, hitting the ball twice, handling the ball OR obstructing the field.

If 6th ball becomes a foot-fault NO-BALL, 7th ball is a free hit ball and as long as the free hit ball is not a wide or another NO-BALL, that is the end of the over.

WIDE BALL:

A ball is a wide if it passes so high or wide that it is beyond the reach of the striker. A wide does not count in an over. The umpire should call and signal “wide” as soon as the ball passes the stumps. All runs scored off a wide are recorded as wides, not byes. The umpire shall not call “wide” if the batsmen moves to a position so that the ball is beyond his reach or moves to a position so that the ball is within his reach. Use a cone or a flag as a marker to call wides (measured as one bat from the middle stump).

The ball must pass behind the batsman AND outside the leg stump to be ruled a wide down the leg side. For wides outside the off stump the ball should pass outside the cone or flag marker. If you are going to call a ball on the off-side that goes **over** the cone/flag as a wide ball, then simply consistently call it as such throughout the game. The umpires are advised to inform the two captains on how they are going to call wides in advance to avoid any controversies.

Obviously if the ball touches the striker's person a wide would not be called. A batsman is allowed to change his stance either during the bowlers run up or prior to it. The change in stance can also be in between the deliveries of an over. In a case where the batsman changes his stance prior to the bowlers run up, he needs to inform the umpire about the change, and the wide call will be based on his current declared stance. On the other hand, if the batsman changes his stance during the bowlers run up, the wide will be judged based on the stance that he took before the bowlers run up. This change in stance during the run up will be considered as the equivalent to a reverse sweep scenario.

The striker may be out five ways off a wide: Run out, stumped, hit wicket, handled the ball and obstructing the field.

BYES:

A bye is called when a legal delivery passes the stumps without the ball touching either the bat or the batsman's body.

LEG-BYES:

This is easy too! We do not consider leg byes. No runs score on leg byes. The ball is simply ruled dead.

SCORING A BOUNDARY:

(a) A boundary shall be scored and signaled by the umpire at the bowler's end whenever, while the ball is in play, in his opinion:

(i) The ball touches the boundary, or is grounded beyond the boundary.

(ii) A fielder, with some part of his person in contact with the ball, touches the boundary or has some part of his person grounded beyond the boundary.

(b) The phrases 'touches the boundary' and 'touching the boundary' shall mean contact with either:

(i) The boundary edge as defined in 2 above or

(ii) Any person or obstacle within the field of play which has been designated a boundary by the umpires before the toss.

(c) The phrase 'grounded beyond the boundary' shall mean contact with either:

(i) Any part of a line or a solid object marking the boundary, except its boundary edge or

(ii) The ground outside the boundary edge or

(iii) Any object in contact with the ground outside the boundary edge.

(d) If the player in contact with the ball is in contact with another player or object which is either fully or partially outside or touching the boundary, it will be considered as a boundary or a sixer depending on whether the ball bounced or not. This also applies to cases where a fielder takes a catch by leaning against a fence which is considered as the boundary marking.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Substitution of players will be allowed only when a player is injured during the match/game. Pre-existing injuries should not be considered for substitution. Substitution for any other reason is strictly not allowed. Under rare cases, where a player can prove REAL EMERGENCY, umpires can allow substitution, on mutual consent. It is entirely the neutral umpire(s) call to allow substitution, after verifying the reasons for substitution. The opposition team captain has no say in allowing or disallowing a substitution that has been decided by the neutral umpire. Neutral umpire has the final call on allowing or disallowing a substitution.

If a player is substituted due to any of the above conditions, when he comes back into the field, he needs to wait for the number of over's he stayed out, before he can bowl. For e.g. If a player stayed out for 2 over's, he has to field for 2 over's before he can bowl. This is not applicable if the player is a wicket keeper. He can come back and start wicket keeping immediately.

In cases where players are not available at the start of the game, no substitution will be allowed. Teams can play with less number of players but more than eight.

Late comers can join their team and come on to the field at any time during the first inning of the match they can be involved straightaway, as no substitution was allowed for such player. If a player was not available throughout the completion of the first inning he can bat in the second inning at any time after the fall of first wicket.

No substitution will be allowed for players leaving early, for any condition other than the ones explained above (this includes reasons like IT release, playing in another league, work call, non-emergency home call etc). Teams will have to play with reduced number of players if a player leaves for a non-emergency reason as determined by the neutral umpire.

If a player is substituted during the first inning of the game when his team was bowling and he does not come back during that inning, then he will be allowed to bat only after 8 over's have been completed or 5 wickets have fallen in the second innings whichever happens first.