



QUICK GUIDE



INFIELD FLY RULE

(refer to the latest Babe Ruth League, Inc. Rules & Regulations for detailed explanations and approved rulings)

(OBR 2.00) **INFIELD FLY** – A fair ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

When it is apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly –

- the umpire shall immediately declare “Infield Fly” for the benefit of the runners.
- If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire will declare “Infield Fly, if fair”.

Live ball – the ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball.

Falls untouched to the ground –

- If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.
- If a declared Infield Fly fall untouched to the ground outside the baseline and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

Fielder intentionally drops ball – if on an Infield Fly rule the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of rule 6.05(i). The Infield Fly rule takes precedence.

Interference on Infield Fly – If interference is called during an Infield Fly, the ball remains alive until it is determined whether the ball is fair or foul.

- If fair – both the runner who interfered with the fielder and the batter are out.
- If foul – even if caught, the runner is out and the batter returns to bat.

NOTES:

“Umpire’s judgment”: The infield fly rule is a judgment call, as the rule states that “The judgment of the umpire must govern”. The rule directs the umpire to declare an infield fly immediately on determining that the play meets the criteria described above, solely based on the umpire’s discretion. Since different umpires may have different definitions of what constitutes “ordinary effort,” the rule may be applied differently depending on the umpire and game conditions.

The purpose of the rule is to protect the runners on base. This rule IS NOT supposed to be a free gift to the defense. The batter is ruled out so the runners are no longer forced to advance if the ball falls untouched. Without this rule, the defense could allow the ball to fall untouched to the ground and turn an easy double-play because the runners have to tag up for the fly ball.

Often times, the manager arguing that the Infield Fly should be called is the manager of the defense wanting the free out after a ball dropped and runners advanced. This is a poor argument because the rule, as stated before, is designed to protect the runners, not to give a free out. If the batted ball truly should be called an Infield Fly, then the defense should be able to catch the ball easily and, if not, should be able to get at least one if not two outs.