

## 10 Tips to Improve

1. You should be physical fit at the start of the season and keep yourself in condition. The players will be fit, so you should be fit as well to get into position for making a call. Your uniform should be clean and pressed. Don't look sloppy. The first impression is important. It doesn't make you a better umpire but you will be respected for looking like an umpire.
2. Decisions must be made positively and promptly, but not too hasty. Don't prematurely make a decision. Try to come into position on a play and yet come to a stop where you can see all of the action clearly, before you make a ruling. One play, one call. Plays should be called with an air of confidence which goes a long way toward having the umpire's judgment accepted. **PAUSE READ REACT**
3. Umpires working together must communicate and have mutual respect. Friendliness and respect for each other. Try to support each other throughout the entire game. Never offer an opinion or advice unless asked because this can cultivate a lack of confidence in the umpire(s). Proper mechanics/responsibilities/positioning should avoid that there will be opposite decisions on a given play. Call your partner off if it is your call: Good Communication is important. Do not discuss decisions with anyone but your partner and then only in private.
4. Good umpiring is dependent, to a large extent, upon a complete knowledge and understanding of the rules. Know them thoroughly. Some decisions are repeatedly made, so with some experience they come by reflex. Study all possible situations to improve. So basic fundamentals become second nature and correct interpretations are virtually automatic. Make sure that you don't have to guess because you don't know the rule or its interpretation, or you will soon lose the confidence of players, coaches and spectators.
5. Proper umpiring mechanics are essential in attaining the best coverage. Many umpires who know the rules well fail to be accepted because their mechanics are poor. This must be mastered if you want to be successful. Practice and discuss with others. Attend clinics, try to improve every time.
6. An umpire must totally ignore remarks from the crowd and spectators. Fans not only lose respect for an umpire who, in any way reacts to criticism, but as a reaction their criticism becomes more intense. You have to be "deaf" and "thick-skinned".
7. The efficient umpire should not "showboat". With accepted signals and procedures players and spectators will accept decisions. But if you behave like an actor, drawing all the attention you will get more critics. Never try to coach a player. You don't like to be told how you have to umpire by a player.
8. Keep the games moving! Players should hustle on and off the field between innings. It should be a case of "Do as I do" rather than "Do as I say". Good players usually hustle, as do good umpires. Never let the players wait for the umpires! **LEAD BY EXAMPLE!**
9. Umpires must be courteous to players and coaches but avoid visiting with them immediately before, during or after the game. A businesslike attitude and atmosphere must prevail. Discussions should be brief and to the point. Be polite and professional at all times.
10. The judgment necessary in making a decision is acquired through proper positioning to acquire the best possible angle. Each and every decision must be made on the basis of fact. Do as accepted procedures provide and rule on the play exactly as it was seen.