

Notes for Scorers - Interference and Obstruction

Interference and Obstruction: these are NOT the same thing, but are easily confused. Scorers should look up both terms in the **Official Baseball Rules – Definitions**. Refer to the playing and scoring rules for further info.

1. Fielders obstruct baserunners (they don't interfere with a baserunner)

If a fielder obstructs a runner on his way to a base, and the obstruction causes the runner to be called safe by the umpire when he was going to be put out, this is a decisive error, so scored as **OBS#** and an error is charged on the obstructing fielder.

If a fielder obstructs a runner, and instead of him advancing a base he has to retreat back, and the umpire calls or signals "Time. That's obstruction. Take the next base", then this is an extra-base error, so scored as **obs#** and an error is charged on the obstructing fielder.

➤ Refer to 9.12(c)

When calculating Earned and Unearned runs in an inning, treat any obstruction errors the same way that any other Decisive or Extra Base errors are treated.

➤ Refer to 9.16 and 9.16(b)(2)

2. Baserunners interfere with fielders (they don't obstruct a fielder)

If a baserunner interferes with a fielder who is fielding a batted ball, the umpire will call the runner out for interference. Credit an unassisted putout to the fielder interfered with, scored as **UA# INT**.

If the out is called due to interference with a fielder trying to catch a thrown ball, credit the thrower with an assist and a putout to the fielder who was interfered with **# - # INT**.

If a baserunner interferes with a fielder who is trying to throw a ball to another fielder, and the umpire calls an out at the base the throw was intended for, this is scored as **# - # INT**.

➤ Refer to 9.09(c)(6), 9.09(c)(7), and 9.10(a)(2)

3. Catchers interfere with a batters swing (the only type of defensive interference)

If a catcher hinders a batter who is swinging at a pitch, and the umpire calls interference, the batter is awarded first base, which is scored as **INT2** and an error is charged on the catcher.

➤ Refer to 9.12(c)

When calculating Earned and Unearned runs, the **INT2** is not considered as a missed out chance, but that player will be an unearned run if he scores. If that runner is subsequently putout on a Fielders Choice, the unearned run transfers to the batter who hit into the FC#.

➤ Refer to 9.16 and 9.16(b)(2)

NOTE: If a batter reaches base because of interference (**INT2**) or obstruction (**OBS#**), this is a Plate Appearance (PA) but **NOT** an At Bat (AB). Use the grey shaded "CI" column in the batting extensions.

➤ Refer to 9.02(a)(1)(D)

RULES OF THUMB:

- If an umpire calls "INTERFERENCE" on the basepaths and sends the runner to another base or leaves him at the base he was put out at, this is actually "obstruction" (umpires aren't perfect). This is scored as **OBS#** or **obs#** and is an error on the offending fielder.
- If an umpire calls "INTERFERENCE" on the basepaths and calls the runner out, this is either **UA# INT** or **-# INT**, so credit putout and assist as required.
- If an umpire calls "INTERFERENCE" at the plate and sends the batter to 1st base, it is a catcher's interference, scored as **INT2** (error on the Catcher).