

SECTION 7 – Blocked Ball

Blocked Ball

A blocked ball is a live batted or thrown ball that contacts: (a) non-game personnel, (b) game personnel in unauthorized areas, (c) loose equipment, (d) an object that is neither official game equipment nor part of the official playing area or (e) dead-ball territory.

Equipment Blocked Ball – SECTION 7.1.

- a. No loose equipment (i.e. gloves, hats, helmets, jackets, balls, on-deck batter's bats), miscellaneous items, or detached parts of a player's uniform, other than that being legally used in the game at the time, should be within playable territory as it could cause a blocked ball. Official equipment which may be within playable territory with no penalty includes the batter's bat, the catcher's mask, umpire paraphernalia, and any helmet which has inadvertently fallen off the head of an offensive or defensive player during the course of play.
- b. No base runner may intentionally remove her helmet or other personal equipment to deliberately interfere with a batted or thrown ball.

PENALTY – The ball is dead, the runner is out, and each other base runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

Notes:

1. *Calling a runner out for removing their helmet does not affect force play situations.*
2. *If a removed batting helmet is accidentally hit with a live ball, the ball remains in play.*

Foul Batted Blocked Ball – SECTION 7.2.

A foul-batted ball becomes blocked when it contacts game or non-game personnel or loose equipment belonging to either team.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. A foul ball is called. Runners return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Fair Batted Blocked Ball – SECTION 7.3.

A fair-batted ball becomes blocked:

- a. When it contacts loose offensive equipment not involved in the game, but on the playing field.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked.

If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference

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shall be declared out, and the other runners must return to the last base legally touched before the batted ball hit the loose equipment.

- b. When it contacts loose equipment belonging to the defense.
- c. When it bounces over, wedges under, or passes through a fence or any designated boundary of the playing field; or lodges in the fence, in shrubbery or in the vines on the fence.
- d. When it deflects off a defensive player and crosses into dead-ball territory; or passes an infielder (excluding the pitcher), deflects off a runner or umpire, and crosses into dead-ball territory, provided no other infielder has a chance to make a play.

EFFECT (b)-(d) – The ball is dead. The batter is awarded second base and credited with a two-base hit (double). Each runner is awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- e. If it strikes the foul pole above the fence level, or leaves the playing field in fair territory without touching the ground or going through the fence.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. The batter-runner are entitled to a home run, and base runner(s) are awarded home plate.

Live Thrown Blocked Ball – SECTION 7.4.

A live thrown ball becomes blocked:

- a. When it is overthrown and crosses into dead-ball territory.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded two bases from their respective positions when the ball left the fielder's hand.

Notes:

1. *The direction that a runner is headed when an overthrow occurs has no bearing on the award. (For example, when an overthrow is made on a runner returning to a base, they are awarded two bases from that base. If they was returning to first base and the throw was from the outfield, and it left the outfield's hand before the runner got back to first base, the runner would be awarded third base).*
2. *If a runner touches the next base and returns to their original base, the original base they left is considered the last base touched for the purpose of an overthrow award.*
3. *If two runners are between the same bases when an overthrown ball leaves the fielder's hand, the award is based on the position of the lead runner, (i.e., two runners between first and second will be awarded second and third; however, if two runners are between second and third, both will be awarded home).*

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Exception: When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag, and the ball becomes blocked, each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball became blocked.

b. When it contacts loose **offensive** equipment not involved in the game, but on the playing field.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched before the thrown ball hit the loose equipment.

c. When it contacts loose **defensive** equipment not involved in the game, but on the playing field.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded two bases from their respective positions when the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

Pitched Blocked Ball – SECTION 7.5.

A pitched ball becomes blocked when it lodges in or goes under, over or through the backstop.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. If the batter receives a base on balls and the fourth ball becomes blocked, the runner will be awarded first base only. All runners are awarded one base from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Catch and Carry Blocked Ball – SECTION 7.6.

A live batted or thrown ball becomes blocked when it is caught by a fielder and carried into dead-ball territory. This is commonly referred to as a “catch and carry” (See Rule 11-11).

Game Personnel in Unauthorized Areas – SECTION 7.7.

A fair batted or thrown ball becomes blocked when it contacts game personnel in unauthorized areas (e.g., outside the dugout but in the field of play).

a. When a fair-batted ball contacts a member of the offensive team.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at

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the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched before the thrown ball became blocked.

b. When a fair ball contacts a member of the defensive team.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. The batter is awarded second base and credited with a two-base hit (double). Each runner is awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

c. When a live thrown ball contacts a member of the offensive team.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched before the thrown ball became blocked.

d. When a live thrown ball contacts a member of the defensive team.

EFFECT – The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded two bases from their respective positions when the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.