

COLLISIONS VS INTERFERENCE REFERENCE

The runner has a right to an unobstructed path while running the bases. The fielder has a right to make a play without interference. The runner has the right to the base path **except** when a fielder is attempting to field a batted ball or has possession of the ball.

Sometimes when the runner and fielder collide, no penalty should be applied.

The umpire must judge whether someone's rights were violated.

This applies mainly to plays where the throw and the runner are arriving at the same time.

There is no such thing as a must slide rule. When a runner collides with a fielder attempting to field a **batted ball**, he should be called out in almost all cases.

If the runner collides with a fielder attempting to catch a **throw**, the umpire must first decide if the collision was intentional, then decide if the act interfered with, impeded, hindered or confused the fielder.

If the runner is legally in the base path and simply running the bases when a collision occurs, he is not out. If he deviates from his path and/or intentionally interferes, or makes malicious contact, he is out.

In sliding to a base he must be able to reach out and touch the base with his hand. If he slides into a fielder while more than an arms length from the base it is interference if the fielder is attempting a play. If a runner goes into a base standing up AND this act hindered the fielder in an attempt to make a play, it is interference. This hindrance would have to be by contacting the fielder while in the act of throwing or attempting to throw.

If the fielder makes no attempt to throw simply because the runner is in the base line standing up; this is NOT interference. If he does not slide, he must not touch the fielder while he is attempting a play. If the runner has already been put out before he interferes, then the ball is dead and the runner being played upon is also out.

The "must slide" rule is a myth. Only when the fielder **has possession of the ball**, is the runner required to make a choice of actions. The runner has two choices, slide OR attempt to get around the fielder. He is not required to slide only.

If the throw is almost to the fielder and a collision occurs; it is not interference or obstruction. It is a collision and neither player is penalized. **HOWEVER, intentional, malicious** contact is never allowed. If the runner does it, call him out and eject him. If the fielder does it, award the base to the runner and eject the fielder.

Rule 7.09 is the main rule that covers interference. Rule 2.00 Interference and 2.00 Obstruction. Rule 7.08(b).