

A stylized graphic of a baseball field. The infield is a green diamond shape, and the outfield is a larger orange shape. White lines represent the bases and the pitcher's mound. There are also some white rectangular shapes on the bases. The background is green.

# Working the Bases In the 2-man system



## **Points to be covered:**

- **Proper starting positions**
  - **Angles / distances**
  - **Timing**
  - **Situational awareness**
  - **Ball responsibilities**
  - **Footwork**
  - **Responsibilities of runners**
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**2-Man crews are what we use most of the time.**



**We must be able to work in the 2-man crew by using muscle memory, a good ability to read the play and the ability to be in the right position.**

**In order to work 3 or 4 man crews (Play-Off games), we must first be able to work and fully understand the 2-man system**

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# *Taking your position*



- After the plate meeting, wait for the defense to take the field
  - Hustle down the base line to your in-between innings position
  - The in-between innings position is in shallow outfield, in a place to not interfere with the players warming up. This position should be used to watch the infielder's throws, assist your partner in game management and to also give you a break.
  - Avoid talking to the fans while you are working the game
  - Only get together with your partner(s) if there is an issue.
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# *Getting set*



- Bend at the knees and hips – square to the Plate
- Try to keep your upper body upright and straight
- Hands on knees helps keep you steady
- Have the ability to move to avoid the ball or to get in position to make a call



# *Basic Principles of making the call*



- Chest to the ball
- Watch the ball – glance at the runners
- Before making the call – you **MUST** be stopped and set. Do this before the play happens. **NEVER** call a play while you are running to get into position.
- When set – your eyes are not moving and you get a good chance to 'take the picture' of the play.

# *Helpful hints when working the bases*



- Always know where the ball is
  - NEVER make a call on the move – get set – wait for the play to be over before you make the call.
  - Distance from the play depends on the type of play, how it develops, your mobility and your peripheral vision.
  - Tag plays – 9-12 feet
  - Force plays – 12 to 15 feet
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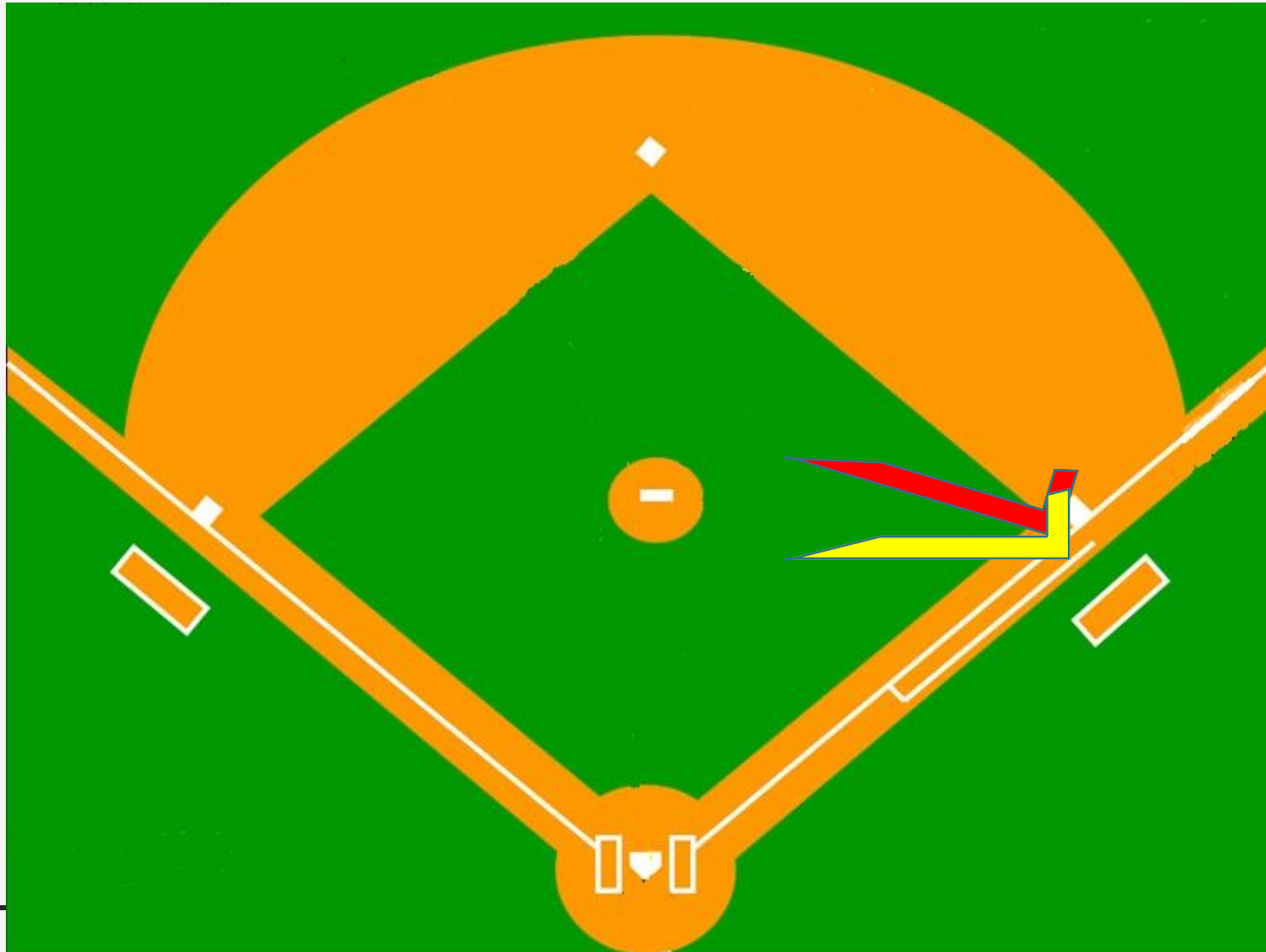
# *Get a good angle*



- Force plays – 90 degrees to the play
  - Tag plays – Will depend on the runner's path. Need to see
    - Front of the base
    - Point where runner will touch
    - Possible swipe tag
    - Possible tag on the back
    - Possible block play
    - Clear view to ball (in glove) and the tag.
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*Get a good angle*

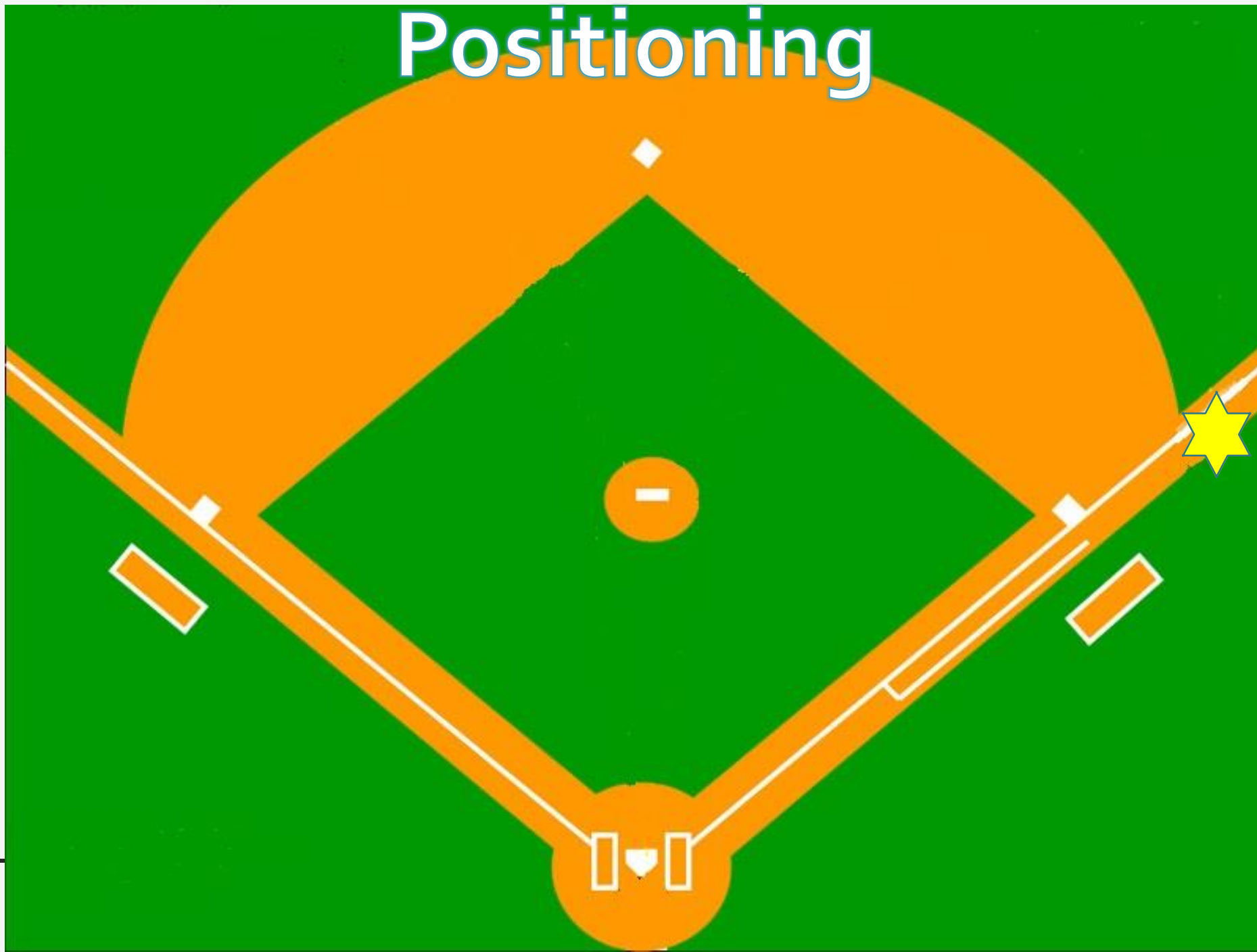


# *The 'A Position'*



- This position is used with no runners on base.
  - The same position is used if you are using a multi-person crew
  - Starting position is about 10 feet behind the first baseman. NEVER be positioned in front of the defensive player. Make sure you are in foul territory.
  - When the ball is hit to the infield you should set yourself up at 90 degrees of the throw to get your angle.
  - When the ball is hit to the outfield then you will be coming inside and pivoting for possible plays at 1<sup>st</sup> base or any other bases. All plays from the outfield will be taken from the inside.
  - Hustle is always needed, as you need to be in position and set to call the play.
  - Foul responsibilities are: Front of bag to right field pole.
  - Outfield – any play with right fielder going to the line.
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# Positioning



# *Trouble balls to go out on*

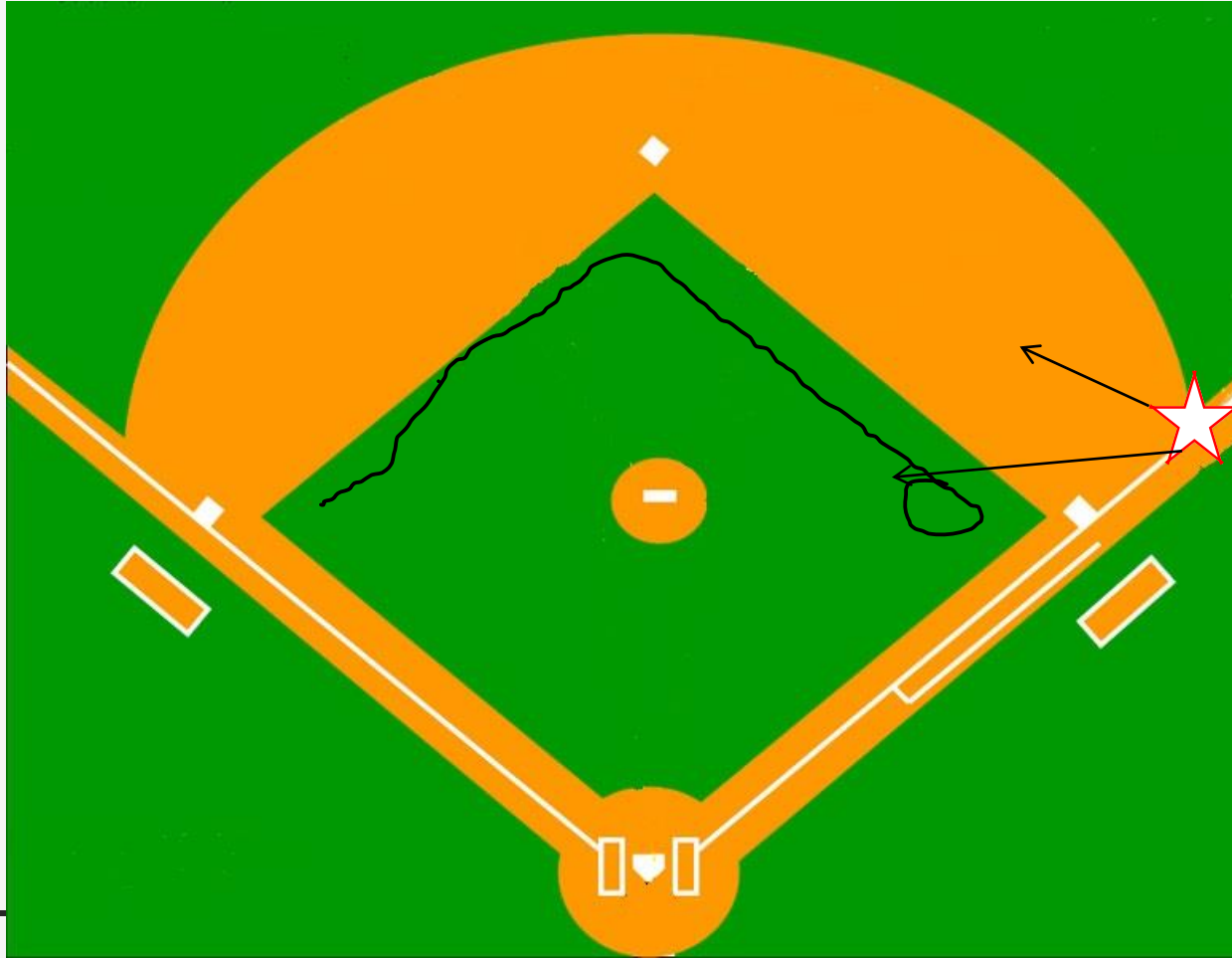


- Any hit that you need to call fair/foul on
  - Any ball that may be caught below the waist (in right field only)
  - Any ball that you have two or more fielders converging on (in right field only)
  - Any ball hit far enough to be off the fence or a homerun (in right field only)
  - **DO NOT** go directly towards the ball – get an angle to the ball
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# *The 'A Position'*

## *When the ball is hit*



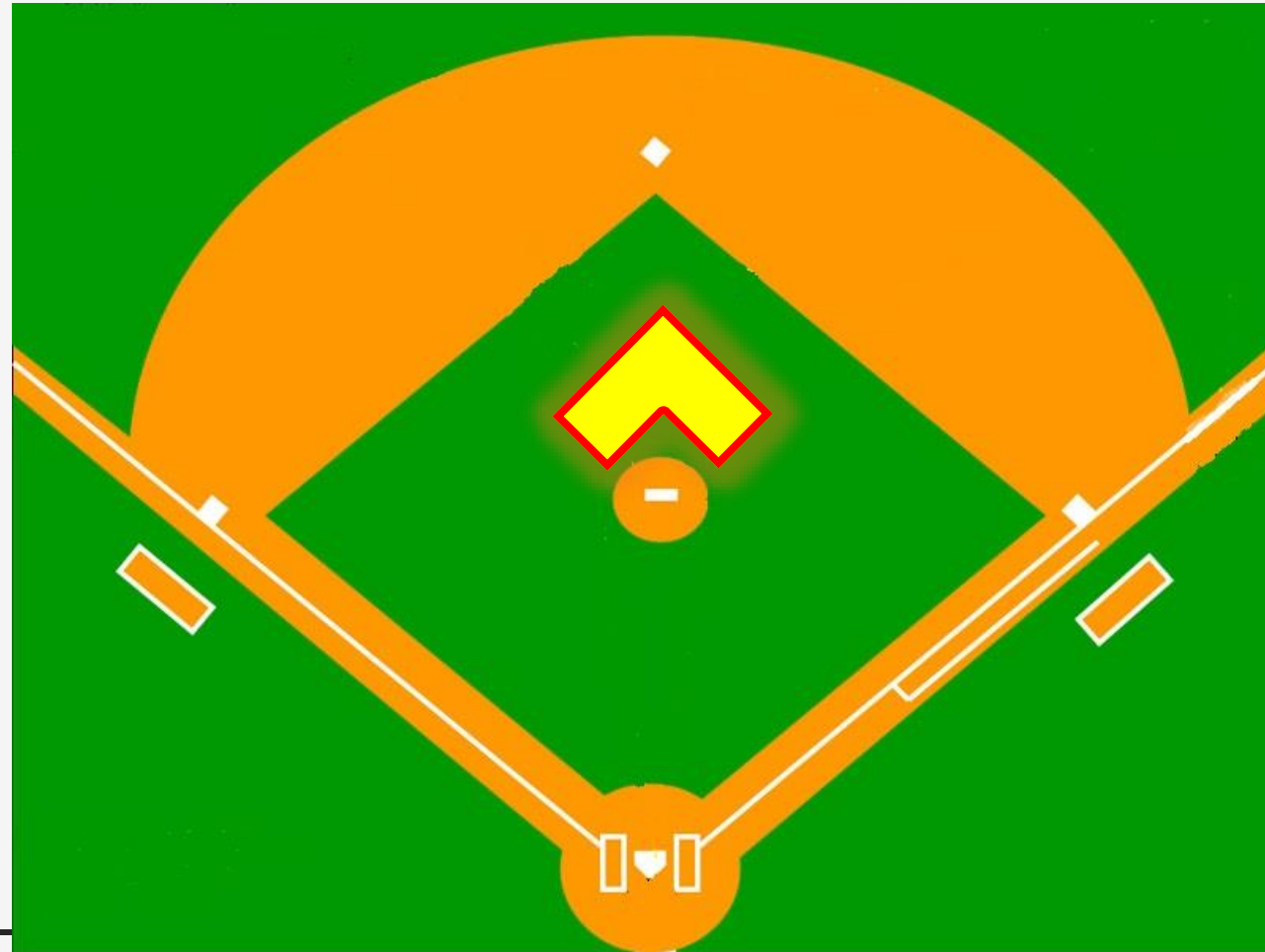


# *The Pivot*



- The pivot is used to get into the infield and to be ready to see the play.
  - Get inside quickly and make sure to know where the ball is. Your primary responsibility is to see the runner touch the bases.
  - If the ball is hit to right field, be ready to call a play at first base on a throw behind the runner.
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# *The Working Area*



# *The 'B Position'*



- This position is used with a runner of first base only.
  - Positioned between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base in the infield. You should be half way between the mound and the 2<sup>nd</sup> base cutout.
  - Shoulders should be square to the plate
  - Gives you a good view of half-swings and runners leaving early.
  - Make sure you are not too deep to see the play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base
  - In this position – have outfield responsibility.
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# *The 'C Position'*



- Used with runners on 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> or Bases Loaded.
  - This does not matter if there is a runner on 1<sup>st</sup> or not. Generally speaking, the lead runners are the important runners.
  - Starting position is half way between the mound and 2<sup>nd</sup> base cutout on the shortstop side.
  - Outfield hits – once again – get to working area
  - Long call at first base. Make sure to get on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of the mound
  - The base umpire is responsible for plays at all of the bases. Plate umpire is back-up only.
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# Positioning



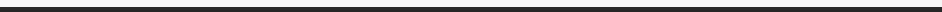


# *Other Base Tasks*



- Touches
  - Tag-Ups
  - Run Downs
  - Appeal Plays
  - Asking for help
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# Elements of Making a call



## Follow the Ball

The fielder MUST have the ball for a play to happen. By watching the ball, you ensure the fielder has it in his possession, and you will be able to adjust should the throw be offline, or the fielder misplays it.

Both umpires must initially follow the ball, as responsibilities may change.

**Let the ball take you to the play.**

*This will help you with making the call and watching for obstruction/interference with the runners.*





## Get into position

An umpire can't judge a play if he or she is on the move during the play. Get to where you need to be, then be completely set before the play happens.





## Angle over distance

There may not be an opportunity to get as close to the play as you would like.

If the distance from the play isn't optimal, at least ensure you have the best angle to see the tag/play at the base, and the runner reaching the base in order to judge which came first.

This also applies to the catch/no catch.

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## See the entire play then call it

It's important to make sure the fielder has control of the ball, makes the tag before the runner arrives and holds on to the ball – and that runner doesn't come off the base – before signaling out or safe. There is no reason to rush your judgement. Let the whole play happen, then make the call.



# Covering the tough plays

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*Seeing the  
Pick-off play  
At first base*

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*Seeing the play back*  
*At*  
*Third Base*

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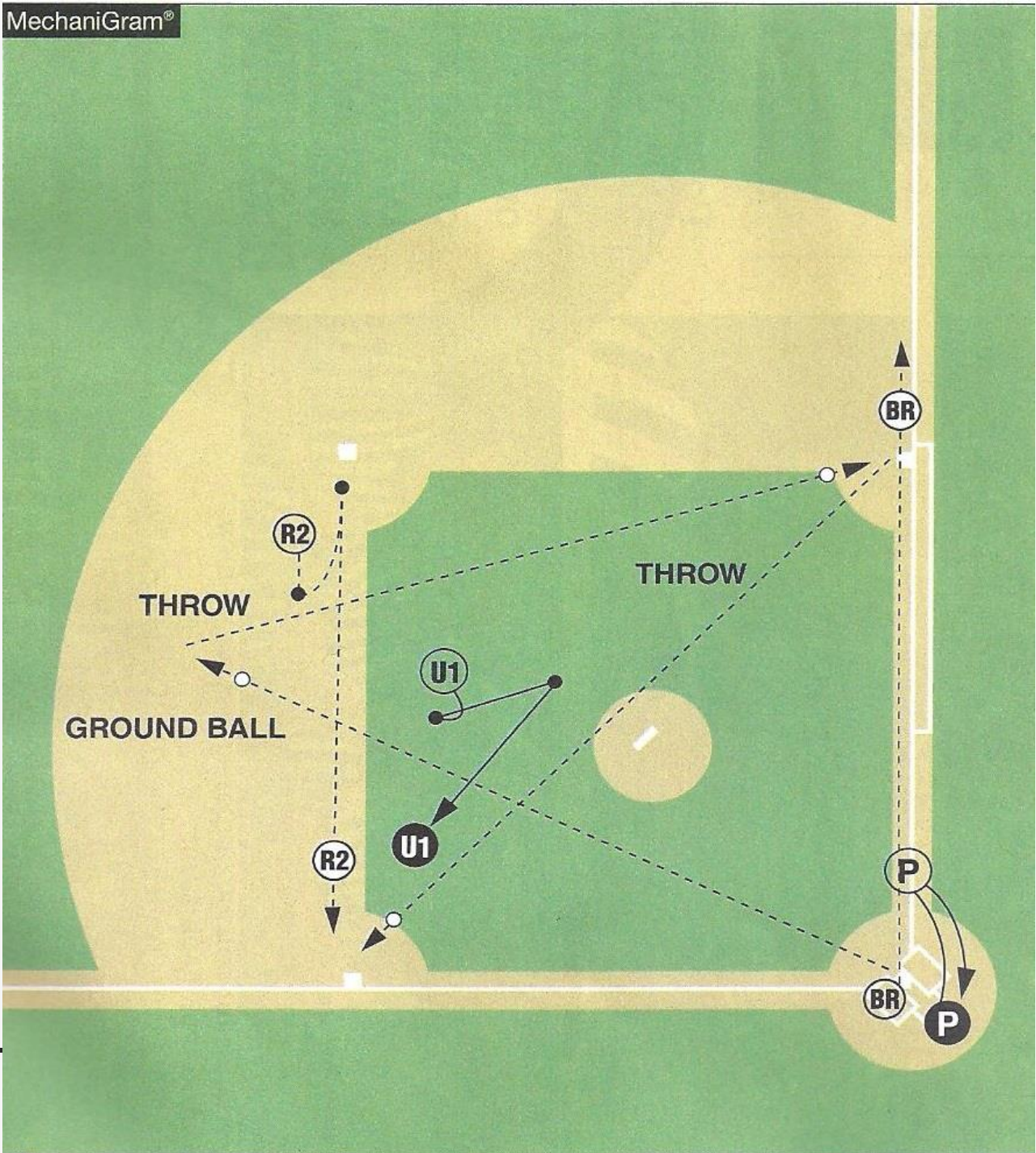




Open to the ball- make sure to keep your eye on the ball.

Slide towards first base to see that play.

When you see the play coming back to 3B, then slide back through the working area to see the play.





*Footwork for calling a  
double play  
While working  
the B or C position*

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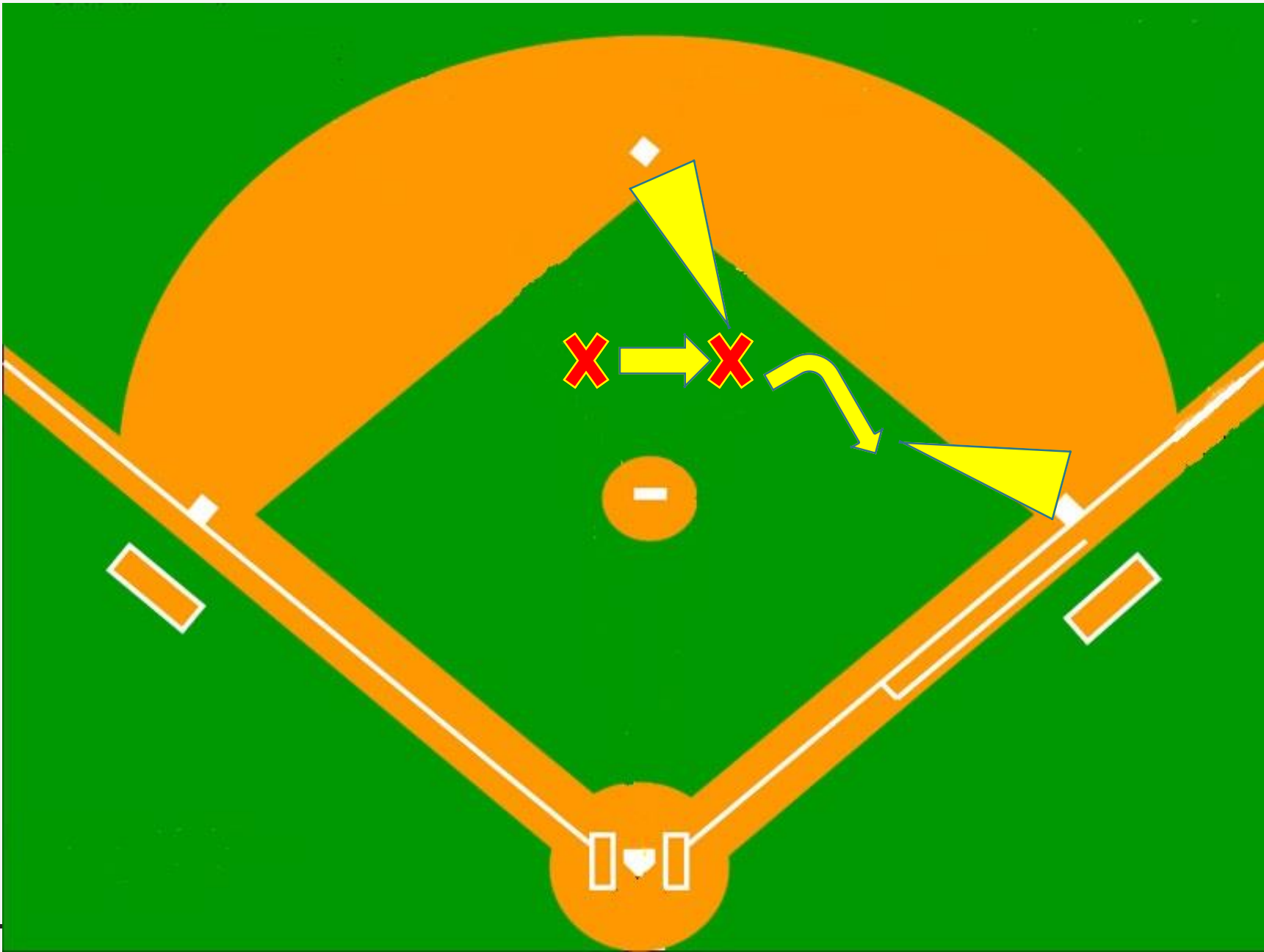


- **First, understand that this is hard. Probably the hardest thing a base umpire must do in a two-man system...mechanically speaking. Many umpires don't know how to do this properly.**
  - **Second, understand what the footwork is trying to do. It is trying to get you in the best possible position (from your initial starting position) to see the "money play".**
  - **The "money play" is the play at first base. Usually (not always, but usually) the play at second base is not that close, but the backend at first base is often a "whacker"....and often that backend can determine whether a run scores or an inning ends. So, we need footwork mechanics that gets the base umpire into the best position to see the play at first.**
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- **The basic footwork steps that we MUST work on are:**
    - **Stepping up and opening to the ball**
    - **If in “C” position, then slide to “B” side**
    - **Some basic steps backward and opening for 2<sup>nd</sup> move**
    - **Crossing our feet over and never losing sight of the ball**
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## Remember – Runner responsibilities

If there is more than 1 runner, someone needs to keep an eye on all of them. Watch for:

- Touching the bases
  - Interference
  - Obstruction
  - Someone has the ball, and someone has the runners
  - Think about which runners you are responsible for
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**PLEASE REVIEW THE 2-MAN BASE  
UMPIRE INFORMATION IN YOUR  
MECHANICS MANUAL.  
IT IS ON PAGES 25 – 59.**

**I HAVE SENT SOME OTHER INFORMATION  
BY E-MAIL TO YOU AS WELL.**

***This program will be posted on our  
web site if you want to review it.***

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