

The Forward Eagle

Compiled Weekly by Tim Forward
for
The Riverdale Senior Services Center
Bronx, NY

Current events

1.

On Friday evening this October 25th, Major League Baseball (MLB) will host the first game of the World Series. It’s time to brush up on some of the finer, and more obvious, aspects of the game.

2.

MLB strike zone:

In professional MLB, the top of the strike zone is defined as the imaginary line at the midpoint between the top of the batter's shoulders and the top of his uniform pants. The bottom of the zone extends to just below the his kneecap.

Historical changes:

The top of the strike zone has been debated and changed over time. From 1969 to 1987 the batter’s armpits were used to set the upper limit of the strike zone.

Subjective area:

The height of the strike zone is also determined by the batter's height and stance. It can vary slightly from batter to batter and umpire to umpire.

Pitch must cross the plate:

To be called a strike, the ball must pass over any part of home plate within defined limits of the zone.

3.

Calling balls and strikes:

The home plate umpire stands behind the catcher and is responsible for determining whether each ball pitched is in the strike zone. If it is, it’s a “strike.” If it is not, it’s a “ball.”

Signaling strikes:

A strike is signaled with the right hand, using the traditional clenched fist ("pounding the door"), or signal with a finger or fingers shot out to the side. A strike is verbalized sharply, so that everyone can hear. On a swinging strike a simple hand signal is given.

The strikeout:

When a batter accumulates three strikes while at-bat, the batter will have struck out. The home plate umpire makes the final call to end the at-bat.

There is no signal for a ball, instead, the ump simply says, "ball." On ball four, the ump calls another “ball.” If the batter doesn't head toward first base, the ump can simply say, "that's four."

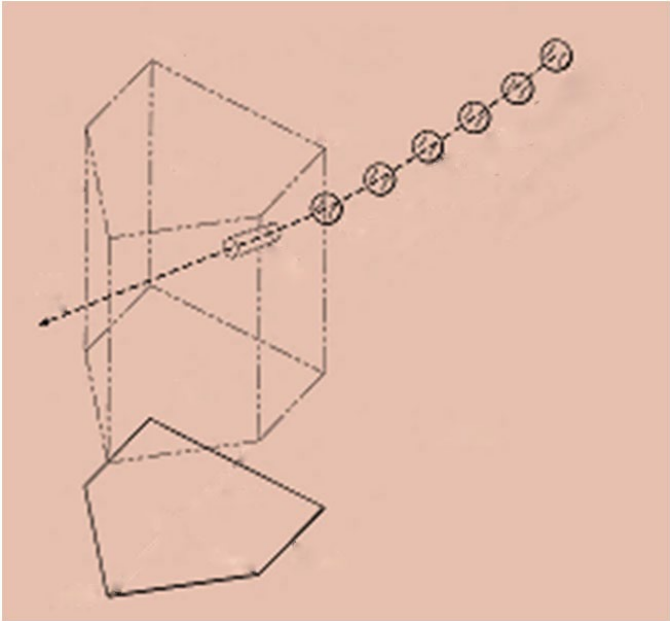
4.

Uncaught third strikes:

In certain situations (no runner on first, or with two outs), a batter who strikes out on a third strike that the catcher fails to catch can become a runner and must be tagged or forced out at first base. The home plate umpire does not immediately call the batter out.

Checked swings:

If a batter starts to swing at a pitch but pulls back, the home plate umpire can ask the base umpires if the batter went all the way around. If a base umpire rules the batter has swung, it counts as a strike.



A right pentagonal prism is a volume with two parallel pentagonal bases and five rectangular faces connecting them. The rectangular sides are perpendicular to the bases, two of which are parallel to each other.

The baseball does not have to be completely within the strike zone to be called a strike. A pitch is considered a strike "if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone." Shown is a breaking ball entering the prism, but not through the forward plane facing the pitcher.

This is a difficult strike to call for the umpire and more often than not is called a ball.

A crafty catcher might help the ump believe the ball entered the strike zone by his mitt placement or deceptive body language. Such moves on the catcher’s part are called “framing the pitch.”

5.

A camera-based Automated Ball-Strike System (ABS) is under consideration by MLB.

The league has tested the technology in the minor leagues, in MLB spring training and in the 2025 All-Star Game.

Instead of a full ABS system, where a computer calls every pitch, MLB is focusing on a "challenge system."

In this system, a human umpire still makes the initial ball and strike calls.

The pitcher, catcher, or batter can then challenge the call, and a replay system using the camera technology makes a final ruling.

Challenge process:

A team would have a limited number of challenges per game with no penalty for a lost challenge.

The strike zone size is adjusted for each batter’s height and stance.

The ABS tracks the ball's location with high accuracy as it crosses or misses the plate.

Word of the week

balk

/bô(l)k,bă(l)k/

verb

- hesitate or be unwilling to accept an idea or undertaking.
"any gardener will at first balk at enclosing the garden"
- thwart or hinder (a plan or person).

"the utmost of his influence will be invoked to balk the law"

- prevent a person or animal from having something.
- Baseball: (of a pitcher) makes an illegal motion, he is penalized by an advance of the base runners.

"the rookie balked and permitted Robinson to score"

noun

- Baseball: an illegal motion made by a pitcher that may deceive a base runner.
- a roughly squared timber beam.
- any area on a pool or billiard table in which play is restricted in some way.
- a ridge left unplowed between furrows.

The Forward Eagle

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Tim Forward Editor

This paper is offered as a review of recent topics taken up by the current events discussion group at The Riverdale Senior Services Center.

Please join us at the Center for Ageless Living, 2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, NY each Monday at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon for Current Events with Tim.