

What is a Foul Ball?

(1) A ball that stops or is touched (not caught on a fly) in foul territory before reaching first or third base. The position of ball matters, not the position of person touching the ball. Examples: batter bunts – the ball is rolling foul up the third base line - the catcher touches the ball in foul territory (even if it subsequently rolls fair); a bouncing ball up the first base line that is touched by the first baseman while the ball is just foul. It does not matter if the feet or hands of the first baseman are fair or foul, only the position of the ball matters when it is first touched.

(2) A (bouncing) ball that touches ground (fair or foul, it does not matter) before first or third base and then subsequently goes past first or third over foul territory. Example: a spinning bouncing ball up the third base line that first bounces fair then goes wide (to the left) of third base.

(3) A ball that touches the ground for the first time in foul territory past first or third base. Example: a line drive just right of the foul line in right field.

(4) A ball, while over foul territory, touches anybody (an offensive player, a defensive player, an umpire, coach, etc.) or anything that is not part of the natural ground. The position of the ball matters, not the position of what was touched. Examples: a bouncing ball is kicked by the batter while she is running up the first base line and the ball is over foul territory; a ball that ricochets off the plate umpire and then goes back to the pitcher; after a long run the right fielder attempts to catch a ball that is over foul territory but it drops out of her glove.

(5) While the ball is over foul territory when an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball (not trying to catch a pop-up). Example: the batter is running up the first base line and bumps the first baseman while she is waiting for a ball which is foul.

(6) A ball that touches the bat, then, while the batter is still in the batter's box, touches the batter (including clothing, helmet, shoe, etc.) or the bat in the batter's hands. Example: a batted ball that hits home plate and bounces up and hits the batter while she is still in the batter's box. It does not matter if the ball touched the batter while she is fair or foul, only that she is still in the batter's box.

(7) A ball that goes directly from the bat to the catcher's body (head, arm, leg, etc.) or catcher's equipment and is then caught by someone else or caught by the catcher. Example: the batter tips a ball that hits the catcher's helmet, ricochets into the air, and is then caught by the catcher.

Notes:

A ball that hits the colored portion of first base is a foul ball. A ball that hits the white portion of first base or hits third base is not a foul ball, even if it ricochets into foul territory. A ball that hits the foul pole is not a foul ball. The foul line is not in foul territory. Home plate is not in foul territory.

With respect to foul balls, the pitcher's plate and home plate are both considered part of the natural ground (just like a rock, dirt, hole, etc.). This means that a ball that hits the pitcher's plate (or home plate) and ricochets foul before first or third is a foul ball.

With respect to foul balls, a fence is not part of the ground.

A foul ball is a strike, except it cannot be strike three. A ball that is bunted foul is a strike, and it can be strike three.

A foul ball is a dead ball.

What is a Foul Tip?

It is a batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's hand or glove, and is then caught by the catcher (even if it hits some other part of the catcher after hitting the hand or glove). A foul tip is a strike (possibly strike three). A foul tip is a live ball. A potential foul tip that hits the ground (is dropped) is a foul ball, not a foul tip.