

Introduction

Thank you for stepping up and being the leader/coach for your association's umpires. It means a lot for not just to our association (BCBUA), but also to each and every level 1 and 2 umpire, many under the age of 16, who are taking a big step of faith to walk on to a baseball field.

Their bravery is the reason we, at the grassroots level, feel a duty to honour that courage to support them in becoming the best umpire they can be. You, as (1) a mentor, (2) an Umpire-in-chief (UIC) or (3) an umpire coordinator/allocator, contribute to their enjoyment of the game as umpires, just like coaches contribute to the enjoyment of the game to their players.

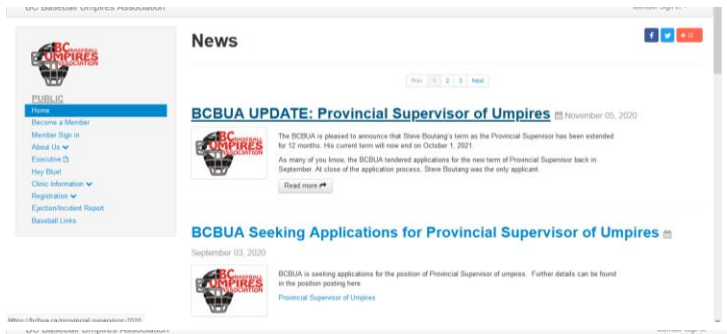
What is your reward? You will see young people improving and becoming respected umpires in your association. The icing on the cake is when you see those youngsters smiling after a game because they did a good job and had fun through another avenue of baseball. Those smiles let you know why your role and leadership is important.

This resource guide gives you a framework for operating a four-session training program with practice plans, visual skill explanations and practice drills necessary to complete each session. Also, this guide has an additional session for your association's more experienced umpires, which is a perfect refresher for the summer season. Moreover, this resource offers information on accessing digital educational resources online as well as how to create and implement a mentorship program from the BCBUA's Grassroots Mentorship Program. Other tidbits include: how to create and set up an umpire equipment bag for practices; a yearly checklists for running your program; and, tips on retaining and recognizing your umpires.

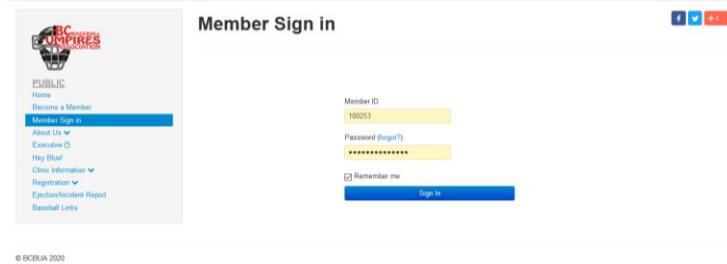
Together, we can grow great umpires.

Accessing the Digital Demonstrations

To help you, there are online demonstrations for each skill in this guide on the BCBUA members page of the web site. By logging into your account, you can find the appropriate skill in the Level 1 or 2 resources. To access it follow these steps

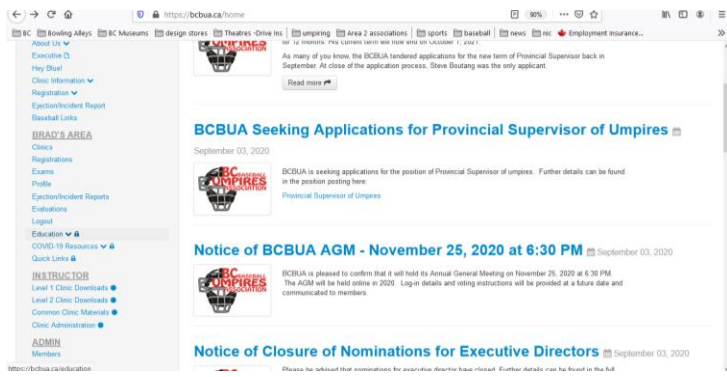


Go to BCBUA's web site
www.bcbua.ca



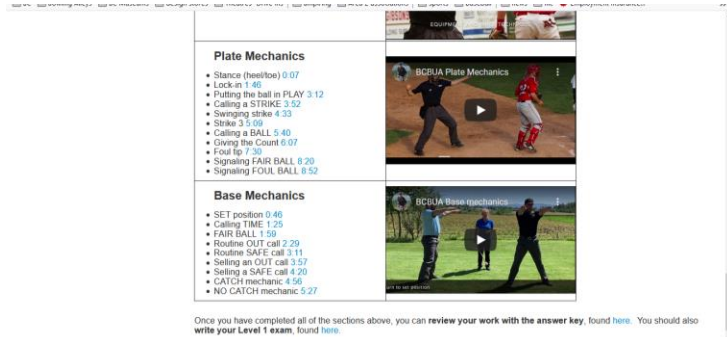
Click on Member Sign-in on the left column.

Type in your ID and password to sign in.



Click on the Education Tab on the left column.

Click on Level 1 or Level 2 resources

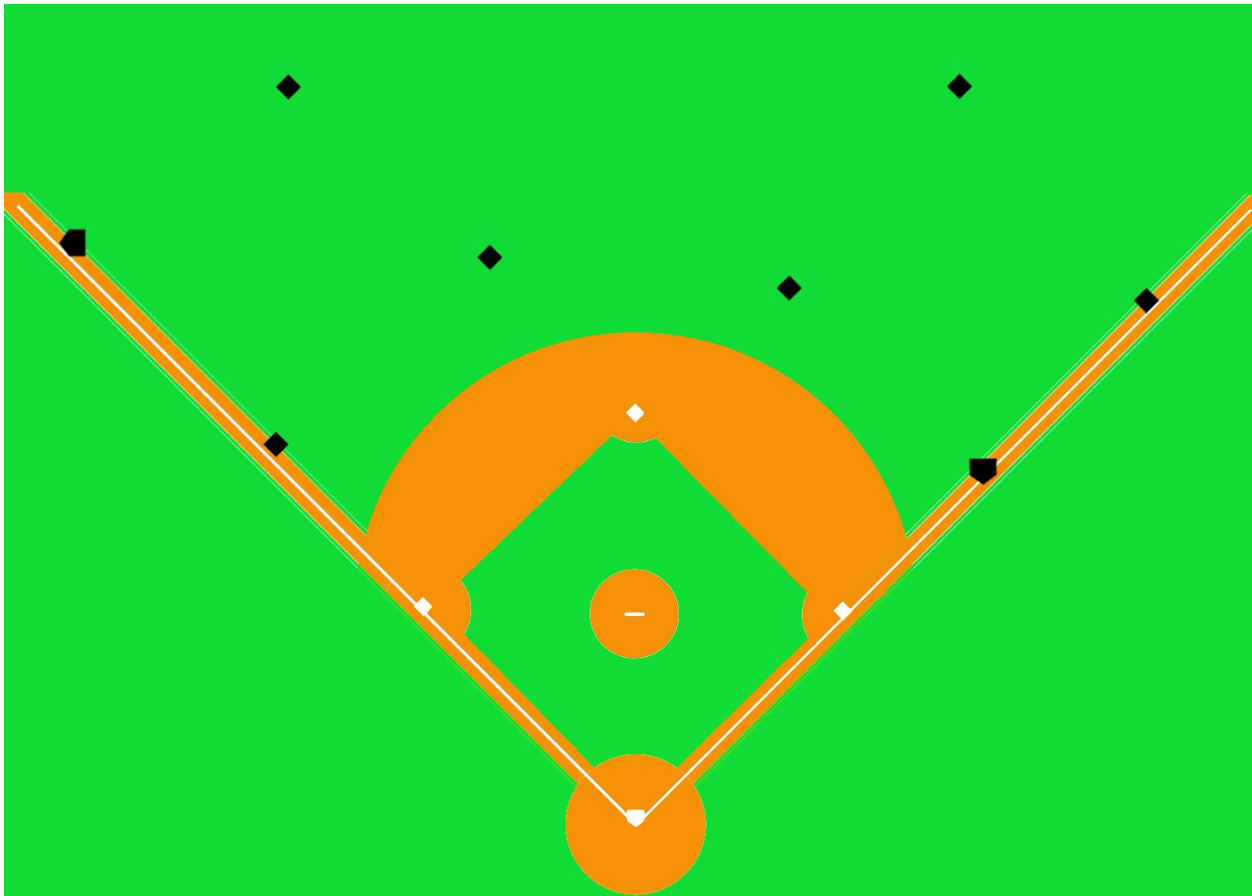


Scroll down to plate and base mechanics where you will find many of the skills for the program.

Other skills will have appropriate directions to access the digital demonstration.

Program and Practice Tips

- Choose a good day for practice sessions that will not conflict with your umpires, who are also players in your association. Try a Friday or Sunday night, or early on Saturday or Sunday.
- Discuss arrangements with your association's field coordinator to schedule the times and location for your sessions, whether it is a outside or inside (batting cage).
- Get your practice bag ready (see appendix 1).



- Other than doing matrix drills or plate drills, use this drill set up for base work and teamwork drills.
- Always start a practice session with a warm-up. It focuses the level 1 and 2 umpires and burns off some anxious energy.
- If you are demonstrating a skill, have two people (senior umpires or older umpires) one to explain the steps of the skill, the second person to physically demonstrate the skill.

- Build skills by:
 - Building up complexity in speed → show the skill in its steps, master each step and slowly speed up and merge the steps (walk then run)
 - Building up complexity in skill → start with basic skills (hands-on-knees set, safe/out call, pivot) and incorporate them into a game situation (a safe/out call on a leadoff double)
- Maximize the time someone is participating and getting reps in learning the new skill. When running drills, keep these ideas in mind:
 - Adapt the drill, if possible, to have more than one person doing the rep at the same time
 - Have multiple stations to have more than one person doing the rep at the same time
 - Have umpires in line waiting on their next rep practice their safe/out calls
 - Give umpires responsibilities when waiting in line (retrieving balls, holding ropes, picking up equipment).
- Have senior umpires (trainers) working at each station to give support and feedback to the umpires learning the new skill. Look for teachable moments.
- Another source of trainers can be your older level 2 umpires, who can help in running the drills at the practice.
- If the trainers are noticing a common mistake of umpires, stop the drill and address the issue; demonstrate and drill that specific skill to correct it.
- Summarize after each drill the key and main points of the skill; question the umpires on concepts they have learned in the drill.
- Monitor the energy level and focus of the group. They are taking in a lot of information. If they are starting to lose focus, a break may be needed. If more than an hour has passed, it may be a sign that it is time to summarize and finish the practice.
- End with a fun activity and a closing review like round the horn to summarize what was learned in the practice.
- Make it fun so they will keep on coming back.

Warm Up

To harness that enthusiastic energy of your umpires and get them focussed on the session, give the troops a 5-10 minute warm up.

IMPORTANT: Stress while doing the warmup how important warming up before a game is for umpires. Build good preparation habits that will support them in the future.

ROUTINE:

- Good start to a session is to get the group to run around the field a couple of times, it will take off some excess energy, give them time to socialize and get them ready to focus.
- Line up umpires along the 3rd base line, spaced apart and perform each of the following exercises to the outfield fence and back to 3rd base line.
 - Side steps – Face the leftfield fence and run to your right towards centre field; return running to your left while facing the leftfield fence.
 - Run backwards – Jog backwards by backpedaling towards the outfield;
 - Long slow steps –Return to the foul line by slowly step by lunging forward with each step. Also, called deep knee bends
 - Ass-kicks –Head out again to centre field by quickly run by slapping your feet against your butt checks
 - High steps – Return to the foul line by high stepping and trying to bring your thighs up to your chest.
- Finally, line up the umpires along the 3rd base fence (if available), if not use the backstop and perform the following stretches (hold each stretch for 4 deep breaths or about 10 seconds):
 - Neck stretches:
 - bring your arms behind your back and grab opposite forearms
 - stretch your head in 6 positions: chin down, chin up, chin left armpit, chin right armpit, left ear to shoulder, right ear to shoulder
 - Shoulder stretches – Self Hug:
 - Wrap your arms around your shoulders like giving yourself a big bear hug; lean forward and bring elbows towards navel
 - Shoulder stretches – Rooster Chest
 - Bring your arms behind your back and grab your hands together; push your hands towards your butt. Chin up.
 - Quad stretch:
 - Bring your foot back towards your butt; grab the metatarsal of your foot with the same side's hand.
 - Knee lift:

- Bring your knee towards your chest, grab top of the shin with opposite hand.
- One-legged stools:
 - Bring your foot to the top of the knee on the other leg. Squat down like sitting on a stool.
- Ichiro stretch:
 - Stand with your feet more than shoulder width apart. Squat down and place your hands on the top of your knees. Rotate your trunk and look to the left; Rotate and look to the right.
- Forward reach:
 - Stand with feet wider than your hips; lean forward with your arms stretched out in front of you; knees slightly bent. The goal is not to touch the ground, but to feel the stretch in back of legs.
- Note:
 - emphasize stretching to the point where umpires start to feel tension, but comfortable.
 - For leg stretches, do the stretch; switch legs and repeat. If needed, balance by holding the fence.