

Welcome to the VSDCA – an introduction for umpires

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Introduction

This document will provide you with the information and contacts you need to make the most of your time as a VSDCA Panel or Club Umpire.

A little background - the VSDCA was established in 1908 and has operated continuously since then.

As Victoria's second highest form of club cricket the VSDCA enjoys a well-earned reputation as a highly competitive competition. It is the most common breeding ground for cricketers seeking higher honours in Victorian Premier Cricket and first class cricket.

The widely-held respect for the VSDCA extends to the organisation and administration of the competition too, including umpiring. The recruitment, selection and appointment of suitably qualified and experienced umpires plays a vital role in ensuring the smooth running of the competition.

In addition to the recruitment, training and appointment of umpires by the VSDCA, there is a discrete Association for umpires, the Victorian Sub-District Cricket Umpires Association (VSDCUA), which protects the interests of umpires in a broader sense by providing opportunities for fellowship and learning away from the cricket field.

Just as it is with players, the VSDCA is a perfect launching pad for umpires seeking those higher honours. Many VSDCA umpires have gone on to Premier Cricket, and we have welcomed Premier umpires back to our ranks too. Richard Patterson, Cricket Australia's Umpire Education Manager got his start in the VSDCA, as did ICC One-Day and T20 umpire John Ward. They followed the pathway below to their respective successes.

Whatever your motivation, we want you to enjoy your umpiring, and this little booklet has been designed to help you do just that – good luck, and happy umpiring!

Umpiring Pathway

- Join VSDCA
- Attend Umpire meetings, including induction program, practical and educational sessions
- Stand in matches (Depending on experience may be with a mentor)
- Complete the Accreditation Program
- Opportunity to be appointed to the VSDCA Umpires Panel
- Opportunity may be available to progress to Premier Cricket and then...

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Foreword - Welcome to the Victorian Sub-District Cricket Association (VSDCA)

Hello, VSDCA Umpires

The VSDCA Board welcomes you to our great competition. We have been organizing and presenting suburban cricket continuously since 1908 and are proud of our recognized role as the "second comp" in Melbourne.

The VSDCA Mission Statement commits us to "engage the local community in the game of cricket by ensuring that all our clubs are both welcoming and inclusive; the competition is well administered and that we provide players with a positive and enjoyable cricket experience"

and in pursuing this mission we administer 112 senior sides in the parent competition. In addition our clubs are involved with 25 cricket associations running 13 women's sides, 12 veterans' sides, 14 other senior sides and three all abilities sides. In Junior Cricket, VSDCA clubs have 235 sides across Melbourne and 18 clubs with 500 participants in the In2Cricket Program and 12 T20 Blast sides.

What this means in practical terms is that we support thousands of Melburnians in their roles in community cricket each week.

A vital part of that support is the role that umpires play. We stand officials in all senior matches, and those umpires enjoy a wonderful standard of cricket played in the true Spirit of the Game. Umpires who join us from other competitions tell us how much they appreciate the organisation of the competition and the standard of player behavior.

We have high expectations of all clubs, players AND umpires. To help you, we provide training and education - as much as you need - and there is great fellowship in the Umpires Association.

Uniting us all is our love of cricket.

Thanks for joining us, and I trust you will enjoy your time in the VSDCA.

Phil O'Meara

Chair, VSDCA Board

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Contacts

VSDCA Umpiring Department

Coach: (Benny) Brian Goodman E: bgoodtome29@gmail.com.au M: 0408 338 098

Recruitment Manager: John Doig E: doigygo2@gmail.com.au M: 0407 042 247

Appointment Manager: Neill Murray E: outlbw0@gmail.com M: 0419 881 226

VSDCA Umpires Association

see p13 below, Welcome Letter from the VSDCUA President Colin Newport

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Secretary Rudy Fernandes vsdcua.secretary@gmail.com M: 0433 881 075

Treasurer: Marino Bovo vsdcuatreasurer@gmail.com M: 0402 078 578

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The Role of an Umpire on Match Day

The Laws of Cricket state that "umpires shall be appointed to control the match with absolute impartiality". That statement implies a sound knowledge of the game's Laws, and complete integrity as to their interpretation. There's more to it than just the Laws, though.

Umpires need to prepare well for each match day, and during the day exercise sound judgement and decision-making PLUS excellent communication skills. These actions build confidence and rapport with the players, and thereby make a significant contribution to their enjoyment of the game. Players who are comfortable with and confident in the umpires are best-placed then to be able to focus on their individual efforts and team performance.

Teamwork applies to umpires too. It is clear to the players when umpires are working togetherand this is another confidence-booster. Clear communication is key, and within the umpiring team includes non-verbal signalling and regular consultation within a calm demeanour. Players catch on very quickly when umpires are not working together and this can be exploited to bring pressure on decision-making. Umpires do not enjoy that, as it detracts from their enjoyment and satisfaction.

A couple of thoughts on VSDCA Rules and the Laws of Cricket it should be noted that the VSDCA Rules set playing conditions that vary from match to match and players will be looking to the umpires for guidance and confidence. While players themselves may be unaware of the full details of playing conditions they do expect umpires to be completely informed on all aspects of the VSDCA Rules and the Laws.

On match day the cricket umpire needs to apply the VSDCA Rules and Laws of Cricket with fairness and common sense and within the spirit and traditions of this great game. Umpires need to look, speak and act in a professional mannerthat earns the respect of players and enhances a positive and healthy attitude amongst all participants.

Over and above the strict interpretations of VSDCA Rules and the Laws, additional management responsibilities exist for umpires during the match pertaining to the safety and welfare of the players. These relate to pitch and ground conditions and extend to overall weather conditions *e.g.*, bad light, wet weather, heat and lightning.

There are also several necessary administrative responsibilities to undertake e.g., match reports.

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A Word From the Umpire Coach Brian (Benny) Goodman

Welcome to the VSDCA.

I hope you enjoy your time with us and are willing to be Coached and be keento develop your knowledge and enhance your skills to become the best umpire you can!

Attendance at our Monthly Coaching sessions is a great way to gain the knowledge required to become familiar with the VSDCA Rules and the Laws of the Game. It is also important to get to know your fellow umpires who can provide you with some valuable tips that can also enhance your umpiring performances.

Quote: If It Is To Be Then It Is Up To Me!

Good Umpire Characteristics

Good umpires are seen to possess these characteristics:

- 1. Integrity
- 2. Patience
- 3. Confidence
- 4. Impartiality
- 5. Tolerance
- 6. Courage

and these need are contained within a high standard of personal presentation supported by good communication skills.

How you display and handle yourself from when you arrive at the ground is paramount. The adage **"You do not get a 2nd chance to make a 1st impression"** remains apposite for umpires - the way you carry yourself on and off the field is viewed by everyone and sets the tone for the day before the first ball is even bowled.

The display of being a friendly and confident umpire goes a long way in setting the standard for the day ahead. There is a 'fine line' however between establishing good rapport with players and the carrying out of your expected umpire duties. Good rapport here means establishing mutual respect – it's not about winning a popularity contest. Players will always prefer a calm and confident umpire who maintains a respectful distance over one who is overly familiar and matey at the expense of getting her/ his decisions right!

The Laws empower umpires to intervene:

"The Umpires are the sole judges of Fair and Unfair Play".

and this will always be easier and more effective if you have already established the basis of mutual respect with captains and players.

Good Umpiring - Teamwork and Respect

Good umpires understand the value of teamwork.

I must stress – umpires are to be a team and as such, must work together as a team. Together is the key word.

On match day everything that is done on and off the field e.g. discussing an incident, speaking with captains, evaluating weather conditions or ground/pitch conditions need to be done together as a team.

As an umpire, respect for the role although being part of the Spirit of Cricket cannot just be expected, it will come from the players where an umpire shows themselves worthy of it. As per the characteristics mentioned above.

Good Umpiring – Physical and Technical Characteristics

Good Umpires are Well-Prepared

1. Physical Health

- Good stamina to stand for long periods
- Sound eyesight and hearing
- Decent mobility to move around to be in the best position for making decisions
- The ability to focus and concentrate for long periods of time during a match

2. Personal Attributes

- Remain calm under pressure
- Be approachable
- Have sound capability to work numbers to calculate for reduced overs and target scores
- Capable of managing players who play outside the spirit of the game
- Regain confidence after dealing with difficult situations

3. Technical Skills

- Thorough knowledge of the Laws of Cricket
- Be prepared for ongoing study on the Laws of Cricket
- Attend coaching sessions
- Always be prepared for opportunities when they come.
- Deeming the ground is safe to play, familiarising yourself with Captains, setting up of stumps, taking control of the match ball etc

Note: The more matches you umpire the more experience & knowledge you will gain.

Equipment for Umpires

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Pre-G

Pre-Game Equipment

- Rubber Mallet
- Stump Gauge
- Tape Measure
- Water Bottle
- Equipment Bag

Optional

Marking Paint

Must Have Forms: MCC Laws Book & VSDCA Handbook



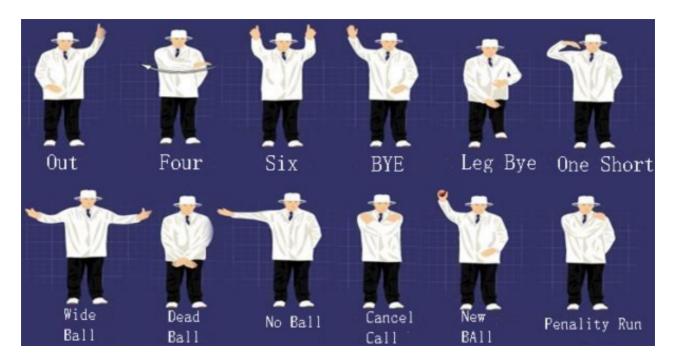
- Laws of Cricket
- VSDCA Handbook
- Notebook
- Player Report Forms
- Pen/Pencil
- Spare Pen/Pencil
- Bowling Cards

Must Have (on field) Items



- Watch
- Ball & Over Counter
- Bowling Marker
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Scissors
- Band-Aids
- Glass Cleaner
 Zinc Cream

On the ground - Signalling



For a video of all the umpire signals download
The Laws of Cricket App from the Apple or Android Store.

You can see a demonstration of proper signaling at

https://youtu.be/Al8nOCKgjhg

On the Ground – Giving Guard

Middle, centre or two centres



Leg, leg stump, one leg



Centre and leg, middle and leg, two legs



Note: When giving guard, always provide the guard alignment at the bat face. Not the front-to-back middle of the bat. Always repeat the guard as it has been requested – "two centres, middle, stump to stump" *etc* This reduces the potential for confusion as different players request different guards in many different ways.

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Education and Coaching

Cricket Australia offers two forms of Accreditation - Community and Representative Accreditation.

Community accreditation is the entry-level accreditation program which is designed for:

- Those interested in becoming cricket umpires on a regular paid basis for the first time
- Umpires who currently umpire with an association but have yet to complete a formal accreditation program
- Parents who, from time to time, are required to officiate in junior competitions
- Teachers who supervise and officiate in school competitions; and
- Anyone wishing to expand their knowledge of the game

The cost for Community Accreditation is \$40. (may change without notice)

Representative accreditation program has been developed to meet the training and education needs of umpires who officiate in competitions affiliated with State Cricket Associations. These umpires may be Community Officiating accredited umpires seeking advancement, or experienced umpires wishing to update. The cost for Representative Accreditation is \$100 (may change without notice)

Details of these programs can be located at: https://community.cricket.com.au/umpire

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Administration Appointments

Appointments are managed by Neill Murray, VSDCA Umpires Appointment Manager via Officials HQ . You will be provided with instructions to use Officials HQ and a login ID. We aim to release appointments for each round before the Wednesday preceding the first day's play. Umpires will receive an email^ from Officials HQ that contains the details of each appointment including competing teams, ground information, and the name and contact details of their appointed partner.

In making appointments to matches, we consider

- overall availability (i.e., for all days of a match);
- umpires' skill levels appropriate to a grade;
- travel distances*;
- whether you have officiated a particular club/ grade previously in the season; and
- any special requests from individual umpires.

We also endeavour to create new umpiring partnerships each week so that over the course of the season you will stand with a different colleague as often as possible.

- ^ Umpires must have a valid email address.
- * Every effort is made to appoint umpires to matches that are "local"; however there will be occasions on which longer travel may be necessary. This applies especially for appointments to 1^{st} and 2^{nd} XI matches.

Once appointments have been made, if you are unavailable to complete your appointment, then please advise **Neill** by phone, sms (0419 881 226) or email: outlbw0@gmail.com

Working with Children's Check

Every VSDCA umpire must obtain and maintain a current Working With Children Card. Details of your card must be provided to Neill before you can be appointed to VSDCA fixtures. The only exceptions to this requirement are those provided by Victorian Law – persons under the age of 18, sworn Police Officers, and teachers registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

To obtain a Working with Children's Check please navigate to the website below and complete the required details.

Vic: http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/

For more information on Australian Cricket's overall strategy to provide a safe environment for children, please visit the Cricket Australia website: -

https://www.cricketaustralia.com.au/about/safeguarding/safeguarding-kids

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Welcome from the Umpires Association

Hello and welcome. As President of the Victorian Sub-District Cricket Umpires Association, I am pleased to be able to have this opportunity to provide information on our association, and its purpose.

We are an association that exists for the welfare and well-being of umpires. We see that as extending to a strong educational focus, as improving umpires' knowledge and skills is a proven way to generate greater enjoyment from our position in the game.

To that end we include education on Laws and Rules at every meeting of the VSDCUA and liaise directly with the VSDCA Umpires Coach Brian Goodman. We are closely aligned with the VSDCA; however we are a separately incorporated association with a single focus on umpires' interests and well-being, and so our place in the scheme of things is often referred to as being the "33rd VSDCA Club"

In the "Contacts" section of this booklet you will find the names and contact details of the executive office-bearers of the VSDCUA. In addition to those positions, we have a committee that is elected annually. All umpires officiating in VSDCA matches are required to be members of the Umpires Association.

For Panel Umpires, an annual subscription is payable by mid season. These fees are used to help provide uniform items for umpires at discounted prices, and as mutual support and social interaction are key features of the VSDCUA, they also assist in helping to defray the cost in achieving these objectives.

For Club Umpires, uniform and associated costs are supported by grants from the VSDCA itself. We shall provide you with match shirts, and a casual shirt for wearing to the grounds. A hat and an all-weather jacket are supplied at discounted prices.

Umpiring in the VSDCA is a great experience, and the Umpires Association is here to help you enjoy it "to the max". I trust you will enjoy it and be proud to be a part of the VSDCUA.

Colin Newport

President

Victorian Sub District Cricket Umpires Association

Cricket Umpires Association

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VSDCA Umpire Appointments Manager Neill Murray

Hello my name is Neill Murray and I manage all appointments for our competitions and work closely with Umpires' Coach Brian Goodman.

Together we are responsible for ensuring that umpires of suitable skills knowledge and experience are appointed to VSDCA fixtures.

During the course of the season we shall endeavour to provide you with feedback to help you become the best Umpire you can possibly can.

Evaluation process

Captains Reports: Each game we request Captains to submit an assessment of each umpire in key performance areas including Knowledge of VSDCA Rules and the Laws, match management and communication, concentration and decision-making, and an overall assessment taking into account the key performance areas. We then use these reports as the basis for feedback to umpires and also for "grading" umpires for appointments to 1st XI, 2nd XI *etc.*.

Where a captain provides a narrative on your performance, we may follow this up, and you may receive direct contact from the Umpires' Coach, Brian Goodman. Such contact is NEVER for the purpose of condemnation or punishment! It is only to provide umpires with opportunities for feedback and improve performance.

Selection Process

For your first game/s, an experienced Umpire will be appointed to stand with you and guide you through to the point where you are comfortable and ready to proceed to a higher XI. Even the most experienced umpires can take a little time to become familiar with VSDCA Rules.

We shall make support and assistance available to enable umpires to reach their desired standard or potential. As an umpire's competence increases, appointment to higher grades becomes possible. We invite umpires to communicate their feelings and wishes regarding appointments to Neill (tel:0419881226; email:outlbw0@gmail.com

A Final Caution – Getting to the Ground

As mentioned above, we make every effort to appoint umpires to games so that travel time is the lowest possible. Please note though that in a competition that spans the greater metropolitan area, it is not always possible. Regardless of where the ground for your appointment is, please bear in mind that Melbourne's peak traffic period is Saturdays from 11.00 am to approximately 2.00 pm, so ALWAYS consider this when making travel to ground plans. Having to rush can really take away much of the enjoyment of the afternoon. Just as players need to warm-up, we have things to do and we need to be organised as an umpiring team to inspire confidence among the players.

Appendices Appendix A

Before the Season

- Community Officiating Online Accreditation
- Community Officiating Face-to-Face seminar
- Laws (Winter) Classes
- Physically prepare for the season (daily exercise/walking)
 - practice matches

Appendix B

Preparation and Match Day

- Obtain your appointment from the VSDCA Umpires Appointment Manager
- Check if you have a partner, if so, make contact and discuss your appointment
 - teams
 - ground location
 - match & arrival time
 - weather forecast
 - playing conditions
- Research the location of the ground
 - plan route to arrive 1 hour prior to the start of the match
 - available car parking or public transport
 - changerooms/facilities
- Night before your match
 - eat healthy
 - hydrate
 - re-check playing conditions
 - ensure you get sufficient sleep in preparation for a day on your feet
- Morning of your match
 - eat a healthy breakfast
 - continue hydrating
 - arrive 1 hour prior to the start of the match
- At the ground
 - introduce yourself to the captains and scorers (check where the scorers will sit)
 - locate match equipment (match balls, stumps, bails)
 - conduct ground inspection (with partner). Look for potential risks (uneven ground, holes, fence-line/guttering, sprinkler heads, surface water/mud)
 - inspect the pitch and ensure crease markings are correct. Ensure pitch and outfield meet competition playing conditions (dimensions, boundary distance)
 - set up wickets, if required
 - conduct pre-match captains meeting to exchange team sheets, discuss interval times (drinks and meal intervals), local conditions (overhanging or inside boundary trees, goalposts or other fixed obstruction), re-confirm playing hours (start time) and any playing conditions that need further clarification
 - conduct the coin toss and re-confirm which side is batting or fielding then inform scorers
 - return to changerooms for final preparations (uniform and equipment check)
 - before leaving the change room, establish who holds the match ball.

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During the Match – Umpiring

- Before calling "Play"
 - give 'guard' as requested
 - count fielders (no more than 11 including the bowler and wicket-keeper)
 - signal to scorers to ensure they are ready and wait for acknowledgement
 - call "Play"
- Tips for better performance
 - make all verbal calls clear and concise
 - don't call over or time until the ball is dead
 - head still as the ball is delivered monitor the bowling crease with peripheral vision
 - take your time in delivering your decision 1, 2, Decision
 - use, give and respond to signals with your partner (if you have one)

After the Match - Post-match and Administration

- Shake hands with all participants at the end of the match
- Confirm match scores with scorers, captains and your colleague
- Debrief with your colleague
 - discuss any unusual situations
 - things that went well
 - things that didn't go well
 - any learning opportunities
- Complete all match day required by the VSDCA (these duties should be outlined in your competition playing conditions)
 - MyCricket reports (e.g. pitch and outfield reports, player votes)
 - code of behaviour reports if applicable

Appendix C

Tips for Newbies

Umpiring is a great way to meet people, stay fit and ultimately be involved in cricket.

As with any job in life, preparation is the key – ensure your body and mind are ready for the challenges that umpiring provides.

In order to continue to strive for improvement each game, umpires are encouraged to self-reflect with an aim to identify strengths whilst highlighting areas to improve on.

And above all-have fun and enjoy your umpiring experience.

The following tips are to assist you with surviving those first-year games, including things you should do before, during and after the appointment.

1: Know the Laws and Playing Conditions

That seems obvious because new umpires have most likely just been through the Laws of Cricket via Cricket Australia "Community Officiating" or even "Representative Officiating" online training and practical sessions.

However, you will need to know by memory the VSDCA's "Playing Conditions" and this is vital.

2: Watch officials in other games

Whenever you can, go to a game and observe the Umpires.

Watch how the two umpires as a TEAM communicate with each other, the signals used and their positioning.

In your games, observe your partner and take the good points and work them into your own umpiring routine.

3: Know the mechanics of a day's play

Learn the mechanics of the game and review them. The more you can think and visualise where you should be, the more natural it will become during your game.

4: Arrive early and prepared

Do not allow yourself to be the type of umpire who arrives just before the game. Get there early. It is expected that you would be there at least 1 hour before the start of play. Wait for your partner to arrive before commenting officially on match matters. This is done as a TEAM.

5: Tell your team and on-one else

Your umpire partner will need to know you are new to umpiring and they will help you. But do not tell anyone else. Act like you've been doing this your whole life. An air of confidence does a lot to gain the respect from players and club officials.

6: Check points

Get in the habit of checking the field; how is the ball condition? In limited overs game with field restrictions, constantly monitor the fielders inside or outside the circle. Watch when players leave and return to the field.

Always ensure you put the right player on strike after a dismissal.

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7: Relax

You may have butterflies before your games, most umpires get them. As the game begins, take a deep breath and try to relax. Get into the flow of the game as quickly as possible

8: Concentrate

Distraction will always lead to Disaster.

Don't allow yourself to be distracted by anything. Focus on the game and your umpire partner.

It's very easy to let your eyes wander to activities outside the playing arena. Stay alert and concentrate on all of the happenings inside the game.

9: Make eye contact with your partner

Make this part of your routine. This habit will help you in all game situations, especially when you are new to umpiring. A lot of things can be explained by making eye contact with your partner together with some simple signals.

10: Forget that mistake quickly

We have all made mistakes. As will you.

When you make a mistake, remind yourself to review why it happened after the game and then forget about it during the days play.

11: Never square up

Never repay a mistaken decision by paying the next close decision. You will lose all respect and credibility from the players and club officials and potentially your umpire partner. Giving a "square up" is not an option to any self-respecting umpire.

12: Keep an ear on the game inside the boundary

Forget and ignore things being said or happening outside of the arena.

Never switch OFF or turn your back on play, particularly at the changeover of ends; this is the time when things may flare up, players will chirp away at each other. Do not go missing because together with your partner, you both must manage player movement by remaining in a position to hear and see anything that might be reportable or would start a problem.

13: Ask for help and feedback

You will only improve to a small degree without feedback, it is the best training tool available to you. Contact your coach should be your first contact.

If you feel comfortable, ask your partner for feedback after the game. It will work even better if your umpire partner knows the areas you may be working on. If you don't ask for feedback, you will not improve quickly.

14: Assess your game

Did you have fun? Were you comfortable? When did things go a little bit off track? How did I go with my routine today? Did I improve in the areas I'm working on?

Appendix D

Positioning

Law 2.9 states that an umpire stand where he can best see any act upon which their decision may be required.

At the bowler's end

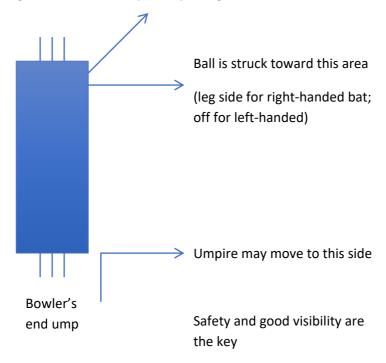


At the bowler's end a stance upright in a natural position approximately 2 to 3 metres from the stumps will allow the eyes to watch the bowler's feet placements and then a quick refocus on the action at the strikers end without moving the head.

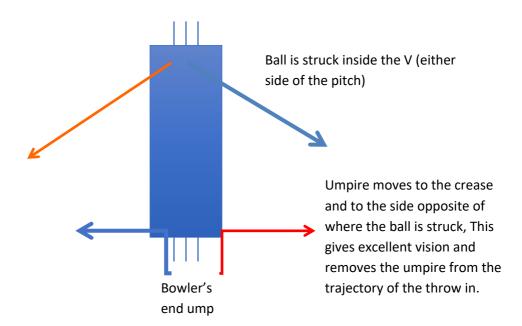


When the ball is played the umpire must make a decision on which side to go so as to be in the best place to judge anything they are required to adjudicate on.

• Convention had it that this is normally the side to which the ball is struck so that a full sight of the ball, stumps and putting down of the wicket is available.



However, moving to the side opposite has the advantage of allowing the umpire to
move rapidly to a square on position backwards while keeping all the action within their
field of view without interfering with the play or subjecting them-self to injury. This is
the preferred option when the ball is hit in the "V" from Cover to Mid-Wicket.



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 Whichever side is chosen there must be no interference with a fielder or the path of the ball when moving to a position. If a runner is in play the umpire must go to the side opposite to avoid putting them-self between the runner and the stumps.

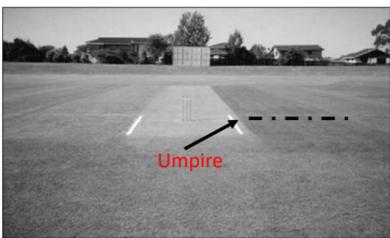


An alert umpire moves to their preferred side quickly while watching the batter, the fielder and the ball. They will be in their final position in good time to answer an appeal. It is not necessary to make quick dashes on every occasion.

First movement at all times should be towards the popping crease.

The best technique is to head for the popping crease and then back out. The benefits of this are twofold:

- 1. It ensures as much of the action as possible is in front of the umpire who must observe the ball being fielded / caught
- 2. The umpire can check the batter touching down at the bowler's end without having to look back over their shoulder whilst positioning.



Avoid turning your back on the ball or the play.



At the striker's end



At the striker's end the umpire should stand about a pitch length from the wicket in line with the popping crease, though there is no reason why a stance between the popping crease and the striker's wicket cannot be adopted.

Law 2.9 allows the umpire at the striker's end to stand on the off-side instead of the leg-side providing they inform the fielding captain, the striker and their colleague of this intention.

While they may voice any objection, the umpire must act according to the principle that they stands where they can <u>best</u> see providing this does not interfere with a fielder.

If the umpire elects to cross from side to side for right and left-handed batters they should walk smartly so as to be in position before the bowler begins their run-up. If this results in making the bowler wait they should not cross.

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Runners:

When an injured striker has a runner, the umpire should position them-self on the off-side with the runner on the leg-side so that the umpire gets the best view possible.



For further instructions on batters with a runner refer to Law 25 of the 2017 Laws of Cricket or view the following link: https://www.lords.org/mcc/laws-of-cricket/laws-of-cricket-animations-english/

Further Resources

MCC Laws of Cricket: https://www.lords.org/mcc/all-laws

Cricket Australia Community Website: https://community.cricket.com.au/umpire

MyCricket: https://mycricket.cricket.com.au

Safeguarding Children: https://www.cricket.com.au/integrity/safeguarding-children