

Defensive Obstruction Rule – SSUSA Rule 1.48

Defensive Obstruction is the act of:

- A. A defensive player or team member who **hinders or prevents** a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball;
- B. A fielder who is not in the possession of the ball, or in the act of fielding a batted ball who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases. Defenders can no longer block a base legally while waiting for a throw to arrive. SSUSA 1.48 (2021 changed by deleting “nor about to receive a thrown ball”)

Offensive Interference Rule - SSUSA 1.45

Interference is the act of an offensive player or team manager that **impedes or confuses** a defensive player attempting to execute a play. A base runner must avoid a fielder making a play.

WHEN RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE - SSUSA Rule 8.4(10)

Runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:

A. When a fielder obstructs the progress of a runner or batter-runner, who is legally running the bases. NOTE: Obstructed runners are still required to touch all bases in proper order, or they could be called out on a proper appeal by the defensive team. Should an act of interference occur after any obstruction, enforcement of the interference penalty would have precedence. EFFECT: When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call "obstruction" and give a delayed dead ball signal for obstruction. NOTE: Failure of the umpire to call obstruction DOES NOT negate the obstruction.

1. If play is being made on the obstructed runner or if the batter-runner is obstructed before reaching 1st base, the ball is dead, and all runners advance without liability to be put out to the bases they would have reached. EXCEPTION: A base runner obstructed in a run down shall be awarded the lead base at the time of the obstruction. Any proceeding runners forced to advance by the award of bases for obstruction shall advance without liability to be put out.
2. If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, that will nullify the act of obstruction.
3. If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base that would have been reached had there not been an obstruction, the obstructed runner will be called out and the ball remains live.
4. When a runner, while advancing or returning to a base, is obstructed by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball, or a fielder who fakes a tag without the ball, the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction will always be awarded the base or bases that would have been reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction. **If the umpire feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be ejected from the game.**
5. When any obstruction occurs (including a run-down), the umpire will signal delayed dead ball.

B. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded first base.