

Baseball Puzzles from Erich's Puzzle Palace

1. An outfielder positions himself to catch a fly ball, and then drops it on purpose. Why?
2. After a batter gets a hit and is running around the bases, the catcher insults the ump for a previous call and is ejected from the game. The ball is thrown to the catcher, who tags the batter out just before he touches home plate. Does the run count?
3. With no score and bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning, the batter hits an inside the park home run. What is the final score of the game?
4. A pitch hits the ground in front of the plate, which the umpire calls a "ball", but the pitch skips over the plate and the batter hits it over the right field wall. Is this a home run?
5. If the visiting team scores 2 runs per inning and the home team scores 3 runs per inning, what is the final score of a 9 inning game?
6. If the lead-off batter for the home team comes up to bat in every inning, what's the minimum number of runs the home team could have scored?
7. With a runner on first base and no outs, the batter strikes out, but the catcher drops the ball. The batter runs to first and the runner from first starts rounding the bases. The catcher recovers the ball and throws wildly past first base. The runner from first scores and the batter winds up at third. What is the ruling?
8. Al batted .250 the first half of the season and .350 the second half of the season. Bob batted .300 the first half of the season and .400 the second half of the season. Both players ended up with the same number of at bats in the season, yet Al ended up with more hits. How is this possible?
9. There are two outs in the first inning, and a 3-and-1 count on the batter Ed, when the runner on third base tries to steal home. The pitch is low and inside and the runner is tagged out. Is Ed the first batter in the second inning?
10. How can a team hit into a triple play without any fielder touching the ball?
11. A runner at third base attempts to score on a ground ball to short. Before he reaches the plate, however, the throw strikes him in the head and knocks him unconscious. The catcher retrieves the ball and tags the fallen runner. Is he out?
12. Name the 5 ways a player can reach first base without hitting the ball.

13. The batter hits a home run over the left field fence. He misses first base and is midway between second and third when the third base coach tells him to go back. The batter retouches second, goes back and tags first, then continues around the bases. Does the run count?

14. What is the fewest number of times that a batter can bat in a legal game, if he starts and ends the game?

15. With two strikes and one ball, a batter is hit by the pitch, which he already swung at and missed. Is the batter out, or awarded first base?

16. An outfielder who can't quite reach a fly ball removes his glove and throws it at the ball, and the glove catches the ball before it goes over the wall for a home run. Is the batter out?

17. A batter bunts the ball in fair territory, but when he drops the bat to start running, it rolls forward and touches the ball on the ground. What is the ruling?

18. A baseball player comes up to bat 4 times in a game. He notices that his batting average for the season (rounded to 3 decimal places as usual) at 3 different times during the game do not have any digits in common. What was his batting average at the end of the game?

19. A line drive hits an umpire in fair territory. What is the ruling?

20. With a runner on third base, the batter hits a fly ball to right center field. The ball goes off the centerfielder's glove back into the air and the right fielder makes the catch. After the ball went off the centerfielder's glove, the runner from third took off for home, before the right fielder made the catch. The team in the field appeals the runner at third saying he left before the ball was caught. Is the runner out?

21. After a meeting on the mound, the infielders go back to their respective positions. Before the pitcher steps on the rubber, the runner on first base takes a lead, and the first baseman with the ball in his glove tags the runner. Is this allowed?

22. Assume that at the end of the Major League Baseball season, every team had a different winning record. What is the worst record a team could have and make the playoffs?

23. A batter hits a line drive down the left field line with the bases loaded and 2 outs, and then begins limping to first. All 3 runners make it safely home, but the runner is tagged out before he gets to base. Do the runs score?