CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN BASEBALL

COLLISION RULE 2016

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Collision Rule – History

- 2014: Collision rule introduced by Major League Baseball
  - 92 challenges* (91 on request of the umpires) – 11 calls overturned

- 2015: Clarifications during MLB season 2015
  - 27 challenges* (3 on request of the umpires) – 2 calls overturned

- 2015: IBAF introduced rule in 2015
  - IBAF published interpretation

- 2016: CEB introduces rules in 2016
  - CEB publishes interpretation guide

*) http://baseballsavant.com/apps/replays.php?ddlTypes=home-plate%20collision&ddlTeams=&ddlGameDate=&ddlChallenger=TeamChallenging

Norms / Rules / Interpretation

Bulletin
Collision Plays
(2015)

Competition Rules
(2016) – 14 (j)

OBR 2015

6.01 (i) **Collision Plays** (formerly 7.13)	**6.01 (h)** **Obstruction** (formerly 7.06)	**6.01 (a)** **Interference** (formerly 7.09)

PBUC

7.1 **Interference**

OBR: Official Baseball Rules – PBUC: Professional Baseball Umpire Corp.

Collision Rule – Objectives

- Reduce risk of severe injuries

- <u>Avoidable</u> collisions will be sanctioned

- <u>Unavoidable</u> collisions are accepted – provided no flagrant / malicious contact involved

- Free base bath for runners must be provided (when no exception applies)

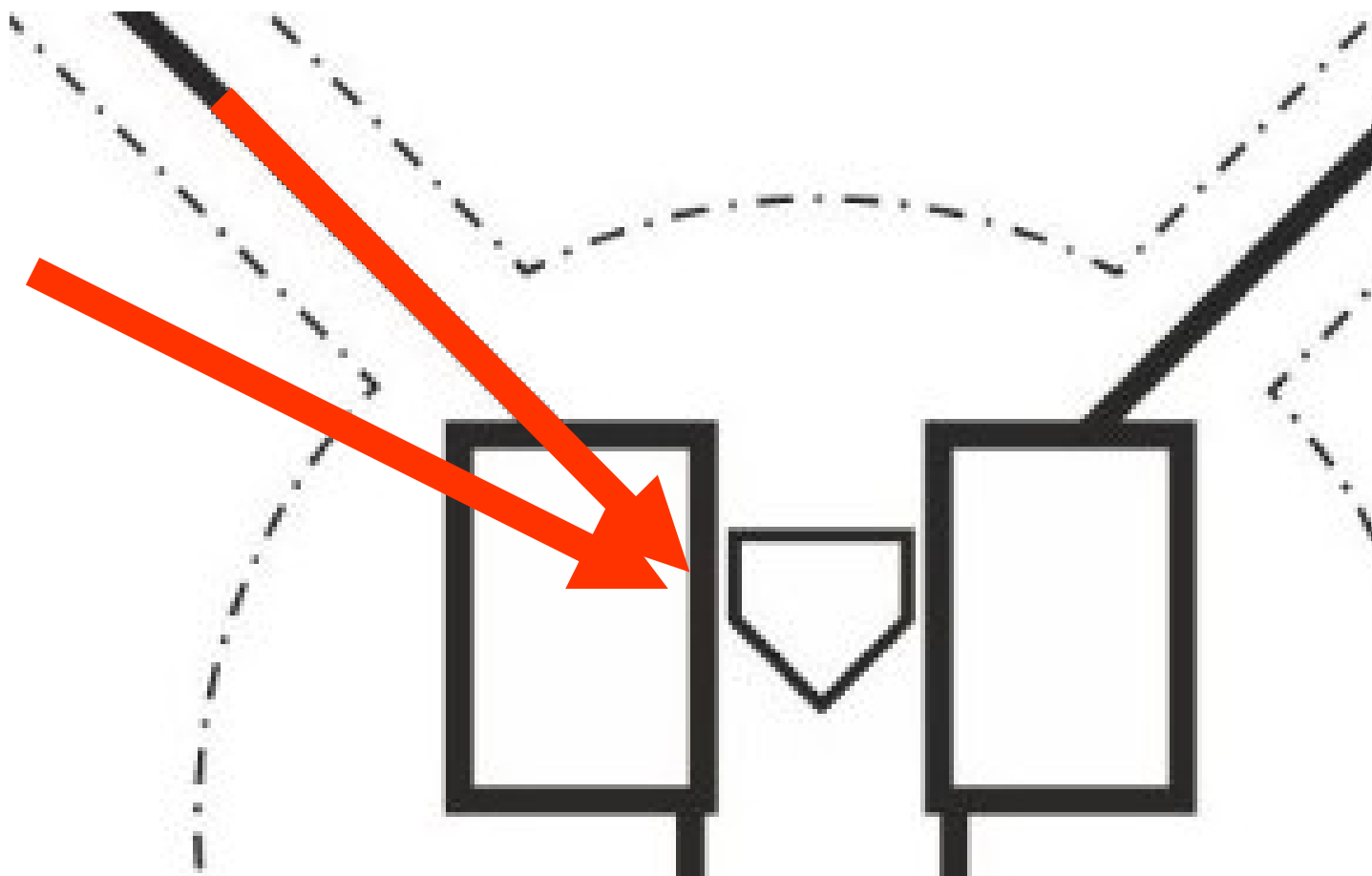# Collision Rule – Definitions

- A collision is **avoidable**
  - Runner had a free (not blocked) path to home plate
  - When an avoidable collision happens:
    - Runner leaving free path for collision: **Interference**
    - Runner acting flagrantly / maliciously: **Ejection**

Possible Base Paths

Collision Rule – Definitions

- A collision is <u>un</u>avoidable
  - Runner had no free path to home plate (path is blocked).
- **Blocking** the base path **is legal** only when
  - Fielder already is in possession of the ball when blocking; or
  - Fielder must assume a blocking position in order to field the batted or thrown ball.
- When blocking is legal: A collision is assumed as unavoidable
  - But still: Runner may not act flagrantly / maliciously
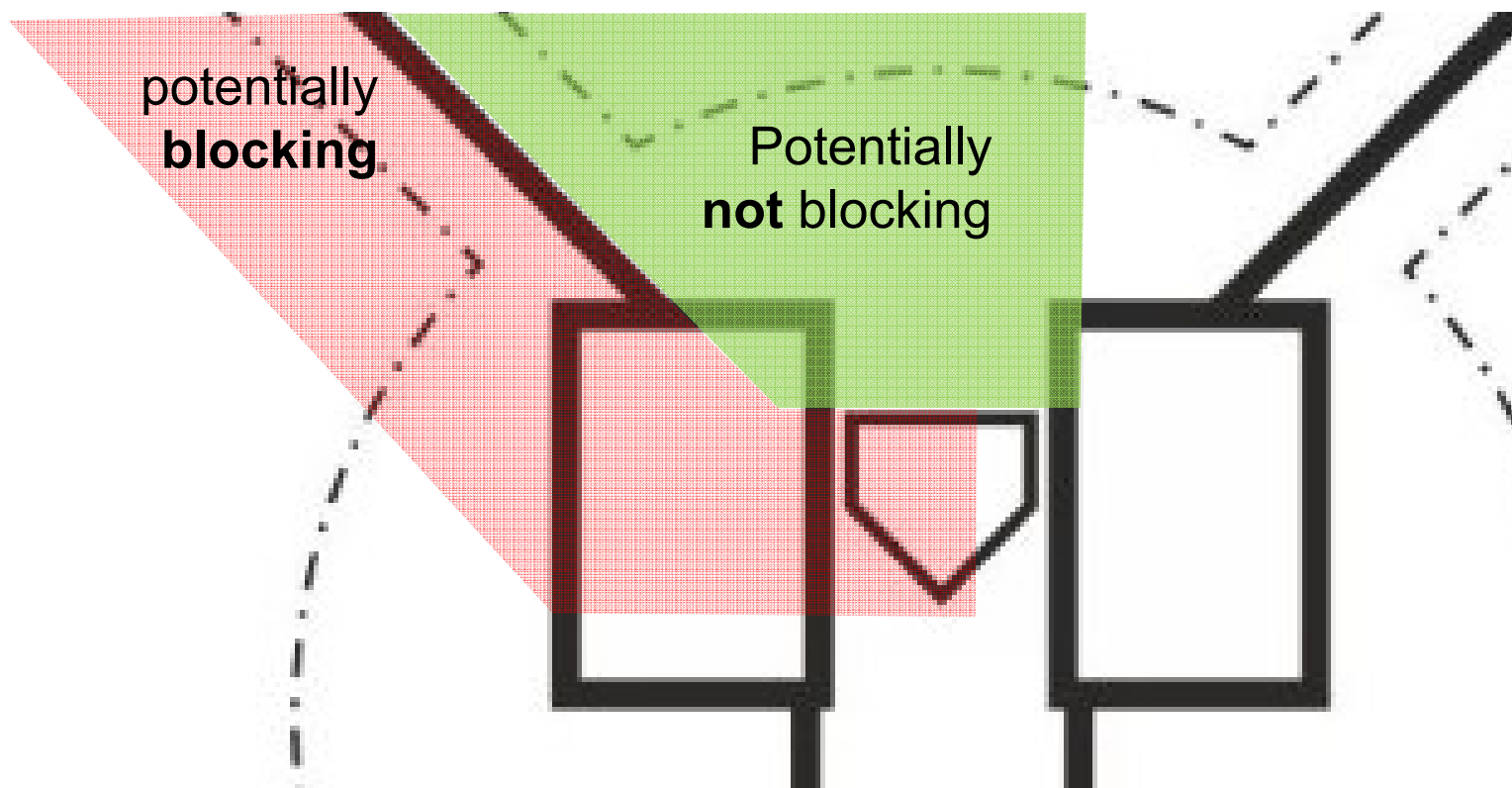
Collision Rule – Definitions

- Blocking <u>without</u> a legal reason will be called as **Obstruction**
  - An actual collision is not required to call obstruction
  - Judgment Calls:
    - Obstruction is called only when the progress of the runner was actually hindered or impeded (a brief blocking with the runner still far away will not be called obstruction)
    - No obstruction will be ruled when the runner would have been called out even without the catcher blocking the plate.
  - **No obstruction will be ruled for force plays at the plate**
- Catchers may not use unnecessary and forcible contact on tag plays
  - Using a knee, shin guard, elbow or forearm is prohibited
  - A violation could be subject to rule 8.01 (d)
- Also see Obstruction Rule 6.01(h)(2)

Fielder potentially blocking?

potentially
blocking

Potentially
not blocking

**Rough orientation only! Depends on individual runner's path!
Not for force plays. Only when hindrance actually occurs.**

Collision Rule – Definitions

- **Flagrant / malicious contact**
  - Actions primarily performed to dislodge the ball from the fielder including
    - Lowering the shoulder
    - Pushing with hands, arms, elbows
    - <u>Feet-first-slide</u>: Runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.
    - <u>Head-first-slide</u>: Runner's body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.
  - Violation will be followed by ejection of the runner.
    - Irrespective of an avoidable or unavoidable collision

Collision Rule – Definitions

- **Interference**
  - "That's Interference. Time." Runner out. Other runners return to the base last legally touched at the time of the interference.
  - All plays before the interference are not affected.
  - Whether or not the catcher maintains control over the ball does not matter.
- **Obstruction**
  - "That's Obstruction" – Play continues until all plays are finished.
  - Runner is awarded home plate.
  - Other runners are placed by the umpire's judgement.
- **Flagrant / malicious contact**
  - Will be sanctioned with an ejection.
  - Flagrant contact after a runner was safe at home plate:
    - "Time". Run counts, but runner ejected.

10 Examples

Each video can be watched
using the **Video Link** on each page.

Example #1

0205

25 MAY 2011

⚾ **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ ⚾ **No**

⚾ **Runner**
    ⚾ Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ ⚾ **Yes**
    ⚾ Flagrant or malicious contact _____ ⚾ **Yes**

That's Interference. Runner out. Runner ejected.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/v15201733/must-c-collision-cousins-posey-collide-at-the-plate/

Example #2

0188

17 OCT 2013

⚾ **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ ⚾ **No**

⚾ **Runner**

⚾ Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ ⚾ **Yes**

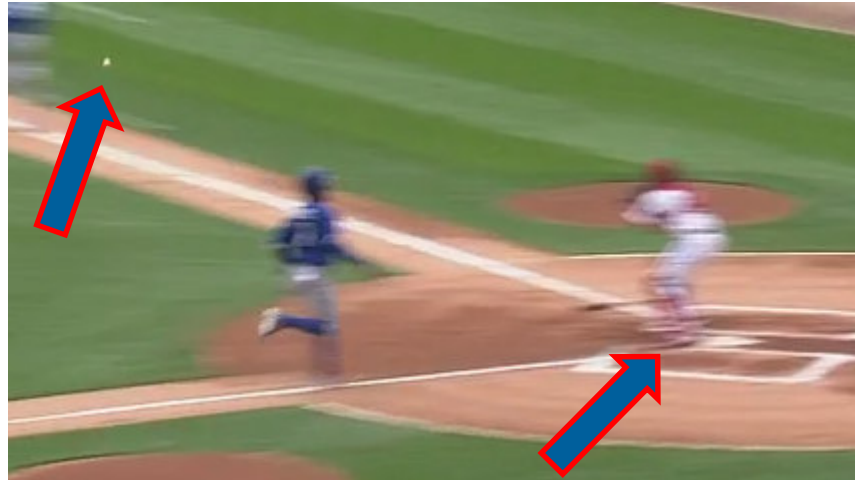⚾ Flagrant or malicious contact _____ ⚾ **Yes**

That's Interference. Runner out. Runner ejected.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/topic/11493214/v31156483/must-c-collision-avila-ross-collide-at-the-dish/

Example #3

0206

17 AUG 2014

🔘 **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ 🔘 **Yes**

  🔘 Bad throw / Catcher fielding the ball _____ 🔘 **No**

  🔘 Catcher already in possession of ball when blocking ___ 🔘 **No**

🔘 **Runner**

  🔘 Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ 🔘 **No**

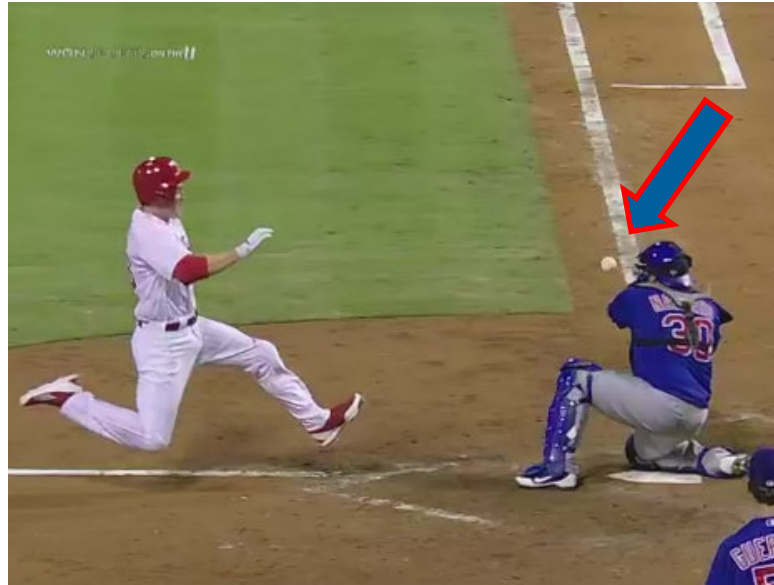 🔘 Flagrant or malicious contact _____ 🔘 **No**

That's Obstruction. Time. Runner safe at the plate.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/topic/63817564/v35440661/torcws-umpires-review-out-overturned-in-1st/

Example #4

0207

07 AUG 2013

- 🔵 **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ 🔵 **Yes**
  - 🔵 Bad throw / Catcher fielding the ball _____ 🔵 **No**
  - 🔵 Catcher already in possession of ball when blocking ___ 🔵 **No**
- 🔵 **Runner**
  - 🔵 Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ 🔵 **No**
  - 🔵 Flagrant or malicious contact _____ 🔵 **Yes**

That's Obstruction. Time. Runner safe at the plate. Runner: **Ejection**.

Video Link:

Example #5

0201

22 SEP 2014

🔘 **Fielder** blocking base path to home plate _____ 🔘 **No**

🔘 **Runner**

  🔘 Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ 🔘 **No**

  🔘 Flagrant or malicious contact _____ 🔘 **No**

Safe. Nothing. Collision unavoidable.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/v36502245/seator-maurer-stays-in-game-after-plate-collision/

Example #6

0189

24 SEP 2014

Catcher blocking base path to home plate _____		**Yes**
Bad throw / Catcher fielding the ball _____		**No**
Catcher already in possession of ball when blocking ___		**Yes**
Runner		
Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____		**No**
Flagrant or malicious contact _____		**No**

Out – Tag Play. A collision would be unavoidable. Possession of the ball.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/topic/63817564/v36558053/laaoak-out-call-stands-after-calhouns-laser-throw/

Example #7

0197

25 SEP 2014

⚾ **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ ⚾ **Yes**

   ⚾ Bad throw / Catcher fielding the ball _____ ⚾ **Yes**

   ⚾ Catcher already in possession of ball when blocking ___ ⚾ **No**

⚾ **Runner**

   ⚾ Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ ⚾ **No**

   ⚾ Flagrant or malicious contact _____ ⚾ **No**
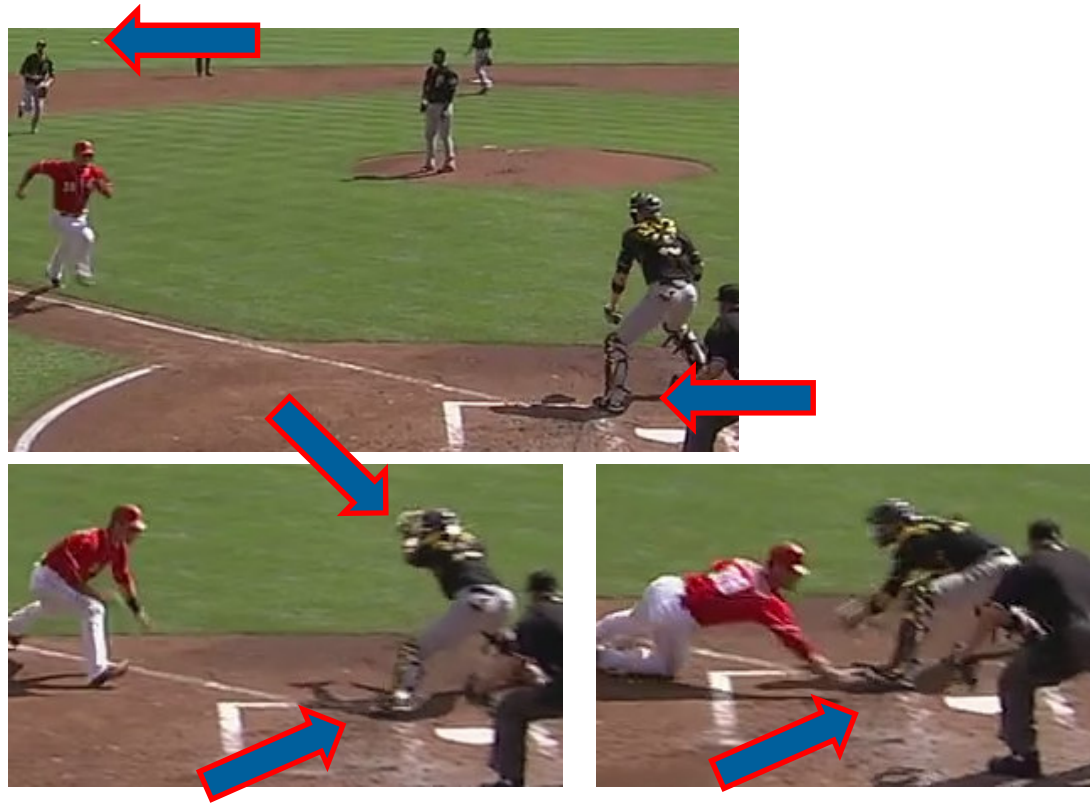
Out – Tag Play. A collision would be unavoidable. Fielding the ball.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/topic/63817564/v36583211/milcin-call-at-home-confirmed-after-review-in-4th/

Example #8

0199

27 SEP 2014

⚾ **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ ⚾ **No**

⚾ **Runner**

   ⚾ Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ ⚾ **No**

   ⚾ Flagrant or malicious contact _____ ⚾ **No**

Out – Tag Play. May a brief blocking – but no actual hinderance.

Example #9

0202

09 SEP 2014

🔴 **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ 🔴 **Yes**

  🔴 Bad throw / Catcher fielding the ball _____ 🔴 **Yes**

  🔴 Catcher already in possession of ball when blocking ___ 🔴 **No**

🔴 **Runner**

  🔴 Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ 🔴 **No**

  🔴 Flagrant or malicious contact _____ 🔴 **No**

Out – Tag Play. A collision would be unavoidable. Fielding the ball.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/topic/63817564/v36096131/tbnyy-umps-confirm-no-violation-of-713-in-5th/

Example #10

0204

20 SEP 2014

- **Catcher** blocking base path to home plate _____ **Yes**
  - Bad throw / Catcher fielding the ball _____ **Yes**
  - Catcher already in possession of ball when blocking ___ **No**
- **Runner**
  - Leaving free base path / Attempt to dislodge ball _____ **No**
  - Flagrant or malicious contact _____ **No**

Out – Tag Play. A collision would be unavoidable. Fielding the ball.

Video Link: http://m.mlb.com/video/topic/63817564/v36446193/wshmia-out-call-confirmed-at-the-plate-in-the-7th/

Collision Rule - Handling

- **Study the rules – be prepared!**
  - Was collision avoidable?
  - Was catcher blocking with legal reason or with no impact on the runner?
  - Was flagrant / malicious contact involved?
  - Be aware: Much judgment involved!
- **Plate Umpire:** In most cases third baseline extended will be best position
- **Field Umpires:** When possible watch action at the plate
- **Use conference** to sort out tricky situations
- When asked **explain** decisions of interference, obstruction and ejections to managers – use precise wording
- **Review** situations after the game

Appendix

Collision Rule 6.01 (i) - MLB 2015

6.01 (i) COLLISIONS AT HOME PLATE *(old format: 7.13)*

(1) A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate), or otherwise initiate an avoidable collision. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the umpire shall declare the runner out (regardless of whether the player covering home plate maintains possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 6.01(i) (Rule 7.13).

Rule 6.01(i)(1) Comment (Rule 7.13(1) Comment): The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 6.01(i) (Rule 7.13), or otherwise initiated a collision that could have been avoided. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. If a catcher blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall not find that the runner initiated an avoidable collision in violation of this Rule 6.01(i)(1) (Rule 7.13(1)).

Collision Rule 6.01 (i) - MLB 2015

6.01 (i) COLLISIONS AT HOME PLATE *(old format: 7.13) – ctd.*

(2)   Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Not withstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation of this Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in a legitimate attempt to field the throw (e.g., in reaction to the direction, trajectory or the hop of the incoming throw, or in reaction to a throw that originates from a pitcher or drawn-in infielder). In addition, a catcher without possession of the ball shall not be adjudged to violate this Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) if the runner could have avoided the collision with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) by sliding.

Rule 6.01(i)(2) Comment (Rule 7.13(2) Comment): A catcher shall not be deemed to have violated Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) unless he has both blocked the plate without possession the ball (or when not in a legitimate attempt to field the throw), and also hindered or impeded the progress of the runner attempting to score. A catcher shall not be deemed to have hindered or impeded the progress of the runner if, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner would have been called out notwithstanding the catcher having blocked the plate. In addition, a catcher should use best efforts to avoid unnecessary and forcible contact while tagging a runner attempting to slide. Catchers who routinely make unnecessary and forcible contact with a runner attempting to slide (e.g., by initiating contact using a knee, shin guard, elbow or forearm) may be subject to discipline by the League President.

This Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) shall not apply to force plays at home plate.

Collision Rule 7.1 (i) - PBUC 2015

PBUC 2015 - 7.1

[...] While contact may occur between a fielder and a runner during a tag attempt, a runner is not allowed to use his hands or arms to commit an obviously malicious or unsportsmanlike act - such as grabbing, tackling, intentionally slapping at the baseball, punching, kicking, flagrantly using his arms or forearms, etc - to commit an intentional act of interference unrelated to running the bases. [...] Depending on the severity of the infraction, it is possible the player may be ejected for such conduct. [...]

IBAF Bulletin - 2014/2015 (1/4)

The IBAF is concerned about unnecessary and violent collisions primarily with the catcher at home plate, and with infielders at all bases. **The intent of this rule is to encourage base runners and defensive players to avoid such collisions whenever possible.**

(1) When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:

a)Whether the collision by the runner was avoidable (**could the runner have reached the plate without colliding**) or unavoidable (the runner's path to the plate was blocked);
b)**Whether the runner actually was attempting to reach the plate or attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder**; or
c)Whether the runner was using flagrant contact to maliciously dislodge the ball.

IBAF Bulletin - 2014/2015 (2/4)

Penalty

❖ If the runner **attempted to dislodge the ball**, the runner shall be declared out even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

❖ If the fielder blocks the path of the base runner to the plate, the runner **MAY** make contact, slide into, or collide with a fielder as long as the runner is making a **legitimate attempt** to reach the plate.

❖ If the flagrant or malicious contact by the runner was before the runner's touching the plate, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball shall be declared dead immediately. All other base runners shall return to the bases they occupied at the time of the interference.

IBAF Bulletin - 2014/2015 (3/4)

Penalty (...)

❖ If the contact was after a preceding runner had touched home plate, the preceding runner will be ruled safe, the ball becomes dead immediately and all other base runners will return to the base they had last touched prior to the contact.

❖ If the runner is safe and the collision is malicious, the runner shall be ruled safe and ejected from the game.

IBAF Bulletin – 2014/2015 (4/4)

(2) **If the defensive player blocks the plate or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called**.
The umpire shall point and call, "That's obstruction." the umpire shall let the play continue until all play has ceased, call time and award any bases that are justified in Rule 2 of the Official Rules of baseball. The obstructed runner is awarded at least one base beyond the base last touched legally before the obstruction.

❖ If the base runner collides flagrantly, the runner shall be declared safe on the obstruction, but will be ejected from the contest. The ball is dead.

❖ If the runner's path to the base is blocked and all stipulations above are fulfilled, it is considered unavoidable contact.