



# THE ESCOA GUIDE TO FIELDCRAFT

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*....top tips for proactive umpiring...*

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## INTRODUCTION

This booklet was prepared by Neil Davidson.

It is designed to help to develop you as an umpire. It will give you tips for pro-active umpiring in the area of fieldcraft.

It will help you to establish routines and your own style when you carry out your duties.

It **is not** designed to prevent individuality – all umpires should 'be themselves' and impose their own character on the match.

All references to he/him/batsman mean male and female.

### **Credits:**

Specific thanks in the preparation of this booklet go to Ian Ramage and Ryan Milne.

*\* Photographs courtesy of Ewan P. Davidson and David Potter.*

<b>PRE-MATCH CHECK LIST</b>	<b>AGREE</b>
Before arriving at the Ground	Check location; call colleague; timings; kit/clothing; rules and regulations; misconduct forms
Striker's end signals for height:	
- Beamer	
- Bouncer	
Balls in over signals 3/4/5	
Re-signal after wide / no-ball / dead ball	
One / two for the over	
Verbal warnings	
Over before tea	
Drinks breaks	
Discuss Playing Conditions with colleague and check that there is a copy available	
Match ball - locate	
Spare Balls - location	
Which timepiece is being used	
Local Rules	
Bails	
Bowler's marker	
Left and Right handers – change?	
D/L print out for second innings	
To home captain - What Rollers are available?	
Check for balls in over signal to scorers	
Check radio 'Protocol Guide' with scorers	
Check timings signals	

## **On Field – pre- match and coin toss**

Take a coin and pen / pencil out with you.

Agree which end you will stand at.

Get your colleague to line you up and mark out your standing position – stand where you feel comfortable.

Check stump logos, if appropriate, are all facing the same way.

Check stump alignment from square on as well as front on.

Check the sight screen position (and colours for non-red ball cricket) is ok at your end for the start of play.

Check bails sit correctly in the grooves.

Check the field of play and the 30 yard circles are correctly placed – ie in a straight line parallel to the Pitch.

Check the crease line markings are correct along with the 5 foot lines.

Check that the popping crease lines extend far enough.

Check sawdust position is well behind the wicket keeper.

### **At the toss:**

- Free hit reminder to captains.
- Get team sheets:
  - Is it signed.
  - Does it conform to Regulations
  - Any questions from the Captains?
- Remember, home captain tosses and away captain calls.
- Umpire to repeat the captain's call when the coin is in the air.
- Confirm outcome of the toss and decision.
- Let the scorers know the outcome of the toss.
  - Give them a radio

## **Interaction with Scorers**

Confirm the intended location of the scorers.

If practical, leave spare balls with scorers.

Confirm the match format, rules and conditions.

Confirm the hours of play and intervals.

Confirm the master clock and back-up to use, where applicable.

Confirm the boundary and allowances.

Confirm the display of runs, wickets and overs.

Agree and confirm your pre-signals.

Agree acknowledgement of signals.

Discuss and identify all young players and ensure scorers (and captains) are aware.

Confirm runs, wickets and overs between innings and at the end of the match.

### **On Field – pre-match**

Shake the hand of your colleague and wish him all the best as you enter the field of play.

Count the players as they come on the field.

### **Bowler's End:**

Put bails on and check re-alignment of the wicket.

Establish the bowler's action and give him his marker.

Check the ball conforms to the Regulations.

Give the batsman his guard.

Let the batsman know the bowler's action by moving to the side he is to bowl at and motioning with your left or right hand the action – at the same time telling and showing him the action.



Check with colleague, captain, and scorers.

When everyone's ready and you have checked your watch, 'switch up' – see Section 8.

Call 'Play' loudly

### **Striker's End:**

Put bails on and check re-alignment of the wicket.

Acknowledge colleague's check signal to start play.

Check number of players in and outside the circle.

When everyone's ready and you have checked your watch, 'switch up' – see Section 8.

## 1. When a wicket falls

### Bowler's End:

Stay in your position when giving a decision – this sells the decision and lets you hear any dissent.

If the wicket is broken, stay in position and wait for your colleague to re-make the wicket:

- Get the ball

Then, meet your colleague:

- Remain vigilant
- With one facing the outgoing batsman and one facing the pitch
- Check balls and overs bowled with your colleague
- Watch for **and listen for** any reportable offences.
- Move closer where necessary in order to hear any dissent.
- Don't cross the pitch at any time – use the crease if required to cross



### Striker's End:

When a catch is being taken – watch the ball – Remember, it's striker's end Umpire's job to determine if the batsmen have crossed.

## 2. Giving 'out' or 'not out'

When giving out or not out – take time – usually 3 seconds or so.

If 'not out' – say not out.

Give outs and not-outs the same way – don't nod your head.

Give the batsman full eye contact when you raise the finger

Even if one player shouts 'howzat' – you need to answer the appeal.

## 4. Possible Dissent looming (i.e.: no offence has yet happened)

Move in closer at striker's end and bowler's end if there is any likelihood of player dissent.

Open hand gestures to players to explain what you have witnessed, you and your colleague's opinion and what is expected of the players – '*Spirit of Cricket*'.

Open hands used to 'calm' players / explosive situations down.

Involve your colleague, where appropriate – never do this on your own.



## 5. General Fieldcraft

### Bowler's End:

Check the ball at irregular intervals or naturally after several overs and make it obvious you have got it. Be consistent in this approach.

There are 3 speeds of movement when moving into position at the bowler's end:

Walking  
Fast walking  
Running

Look as if you have plenty of time – if you run when you should be walking, the players will see this and wonder why.

Go to the side that will stop you from getting in the way of fielders or the ball – there is no ‘correct’ side.

Check timings and inform Captains accordingly – and agree with your colleague – two fingers pointing down indicates two overs behind time.

Giving a ‘warning’ – again, move on to the pitch (to where the batsmen usually stand) and clearly signal to the player, captain and batters – by putting up one finger to each.

- A couple of quiet informal words are usually requisite before any ‘official’ warnings.

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Take the bails off every time you call ‘Time’.

Don’t bring your counter up after the bowler has just bowled to check the balls bowled and if there is an appeal – it will look as if you are ‘raising the finger’.

If a player cracks a joke – laugh with them.

If a player enquires why you gave not out – give him a courteous answer.

If your colleague signals to you – give him a thumbs-up to acknowledge and say thanks.

Stay in your position at bowler’s end at the end of the over until your colleague gets to his position – then move off to square leg.

At the end of the over, if there is a left / right hand combination, remind the fielders of a left or right hander to face – call ‘left hander’ or ‘right hander’ as appropriate. It also acts as a reminder for you as to which side to go to.

If the bowler is getting close to the front foot no-ball line, tell him or go out and pat down with your foot his markings – he will get the message.

Tell the players in a loud voice – when they reach the end of a powerplay.

A couple of overs before the Drinks interval, check that drinks are going to be ready.

Look at your colleague after EVERY ball.

Re-signal to your colleague at no-balls, dead balls or wides for balls left in the over.

In the first few overs, follow the ball from ‘keeper to bowler and turn your body to do so. This shows the players you are watching the ball carefully.

If a young fast bowler has completed his spell – mark on your card the next possible over he can bowl.

- Remember a ‘spell’ is **any** number from 1 – 7 overs.

## Striker's End:

Giving a '*one for the over*' signal – move on to the pitch (to where the batsmen usually stand) and clearly tap your shoulder.

- Tell the bowler as he passes you and tell the batsmen and captain.

Take the bails off every time you call 'Time'.

If a player cracks a joke – laugh with them.

If a player enquires why you gave not out – give him a courteous answer.

If your colleague signals to you – give him a thumbs-up to acknowledge and say thanks.

Make your 'two' and 'one' signals clearly visible to the players – it's for them too.



Consider the need to speak with players – respect the player's requirements.

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## 6. Changing the ball

If you need to change the ball – lost / wet or damaged, use one of a similar wear and tear. NEVER change back to the original ball if it is found.

Do not confer with the players on the type of ball to use.

## 7. Near the end of the first innings

A few overs before the end of the first innings, establish from the Fielding Captain what roller he wants – and for how long. Advise the Groundsman.

## 8. Concentration

Work out a routine for each ball – and stick to it.

Concentrate ‘up and down’ each ball.



## 9. General striker's end duties

If a batsman gets an edge to the leg side, tap your hand or roll your fist back and forward to your colleague.

If a batsman does not hit the ball with bat or glove, pat your thigh, indicating leg-byes.

Back out to your position at Striker's end – so you can see the whole play.

Take a few steps back at striker's end if there are fielders behind you - so you can see everyone inside the 30 yard circle line.

When a new batsman comes to the crease, line his shoulder up with something on the boundary (or outside the boundary). You may have to alter your positioning slightly to do this to watch for height infringements.

When the ball passes you at striker's end, turn your body sideways so you have less angle to check that the batsmen have ‘touched down’ at the end of each run. Always keep your eyes on the ball until it gets back to the ‘keeper’.

Balls left in the over signals to colleague – ‘2 and 1’ – should only be done when the ball is dead.

Giving a ‘*one for the over*’ signal so that your colleague sees you and clearly tap your shoulder once or twice. If it's a no-ball or wide, signal clearly – but DON'T call it.

For left and right handers – if you have agreed with your colleague before the game to swap sides – be ready to do so when the players run a one or a three – take a few steps towards the wicket during the throw in (remembering to stay completely still when the ball reaches the wicket). You then have less distance to travel.

Last ball of the over – if the ball goes to the outfield, it is perfectly acceptable to start moving in if you are at striker’s end, but remain vigilant. This saves time at the end of the over.

As the ball is thrown back from the outfield, turn to face the popping crease and stay still.

Count the fielders at striker’s end **EVERY** ball for off side **AND** leg side.

**ENJOY** the game.....

