



## LBW Decision Technique: Foundation Course

### Judgement of LBW

These training tips are designed to assist you improve your decision making on LBW appeals. By using them correctly, your confidence and consistency will improve, as will your enjoyment of cricket umpiring.

Statistically, at least 60% of all your decisions will be LBW appeals – if you can feel and act confidently in this area, then you will have gone a long way to getting almost two thirds of all your decisions correct!

Please enjoy this Practical Training Module, open your mind to a fresh way of looking at applying the LBW law and we hope that we have helped improve your confidence.

These practical tips are separated into the 4 questions that you will ask yourself when deciding on whether a batter is out LBW or not. There is also a section on the decision-making action.

#### Tips to Question 1 – Did the ball pitch in line between wicket and wicket or outside off stump?

- Be conscious where the bowler has delivered the ball from in relation to the return crease. *(When moving the sight screen, stand where the bowler would normally deliver the ball from an view the “mat”).*
- Pick up the flight of the ball after watching the placement of the feet.
- Continue to watch the ball closely and actually see it hit the pitch. Do not assume where it is going to land – see where it hits the pitch. *(For leg stump – try and find a spot or mark on the pitch that will assist you later on with deciding a leg stump line).*
- As soon as the ball pitches outside leg stump – mentally dismiss any thoughts of LBW. *(Even though the batter has gone back and across and all 3 stumps would have been hit – you have not forgotten the ball pitched outside leg stump!).*

#### Tips to Question 2 – Did the ball hit the bat or the hand holding the bat?

- Use sight and **sound** when making this decision. Most of the time you will not see the deflection, so you are looking for “two noises”. Sight will assist in making sure the bat was next to the ball when you heard the first impact. *(Timing of the noises is important – good concentration will assist in detecting bat hitting the pad, bat hitting ground or bat hitting boot).*
- Be aware of the position of the ball in relation to the bat when you hear the sound – always remember the possibility of pad / bat sequence.

- Sometimes the keeper and slips will not hear or see the “nick” but the body language of the bowler may provide a clue. *(A stifled appeal or a hesitation in appealing could confirm your belief that the batter got an edge before the ball hit the pad).*
- Give yourself time. Wait a couple of seconds before making your decision – give your brain a chance to register if there were two noises or not.  
*(Extra time will allow your brain not to be fooled by sight only).*

### Tips to Question 3 – Was the first point of impact in line between wicket and wicket?

- Be aware of where the batter is standing and what movement he has made in receiving the ball. *(When he takes guard, this is a good time to see his position – note also where he is standing in relation to the popping crease at his end when the bowler is at the top of his mark. If he’s standing outside of his crease, your colleague at square may give you a signal).*
- See the first point of impact in relation to the pad. *(The batter after being hit will often instinctively move back to the leg side – remember where he got hit.)*
- Use the stumps as a guide
  - can you see leg stump?
  - can you see off stump?
  - can you see both stumps?

### Batter Playing a Shot

- Decide whether the batter has made a genuine attempt to play the ball with the bat. *(Shouldering arms is obvious, but a bat tucked behind the pad may not be).*
- Having decided that the batter has not attempted to play the ball (and the other parts of the LBW law are satisfied), then decide if the ball would have hit the stumps. *(As it is a game between ball and bat, if the batter refuses to play the ball, then give the bowler favourable consideration on this last question. i.e., benefit of doubt to the bowler. If the ball was not going to hit the stumps, then do not give it out).*

### Tips to Question 4 – Would the ball have hit the wicket?

- Where was the ball delivered from? Was it...
  - Stump to stump?
  - Wide near the return crease?
  - Somewhere in between?
- *(When moving the sightscreen, stand where the bowler would normally deliver the ball from and view the imaginary line of the ball that it would have to take to hit the stumps – Please judge every delivery on it’s merits as the bowler can change delivery position).*

- What was the nature of the delivery? Was it...
  - An off cutter or leg cutter?
  - An in swinger or out swinger?
  - An off spinner, leg spinner? *(This illustrates again the importance of judging every ball on its merits – assume that every ball will be different and focus on its flight and direction after pitching).*
- What was the distance of travel between pitching and the first point of impact? *(Look for evidence to give you confidence what line the ball was taking after pitching – the further the distance the more information you have to make your decision).*
- What is the distance between the point of impact and the stumps? The further this point is from the stumps, the greater the margin is for the ball missing the stumps. *(When the batter takes guard, this is a good time to see his position – note also where he is standing in relation to the popping crease at his end when the bowler is at the top of his mark. If he's standing outside of his crease, your colleague at square may give you a signal. As part of your routine before every ball, you wish to consider a glance to your partner at square leg - Teamwork).*
- Was the ball climbing or dying after impact? *(It is very important to consider height as part of the "hitting the stumps" question. When the batter takes guard, you can also look at the height of his pads in relation to the top of the stumps, and his knee roll in particular. Note how high the ball hit on the pad and whether it was climbing steeply or dying – you may also gather an indication from things like:*
  - what type of bowler is he, a "skidder" or "bouncy" bowler?
  - have you seen him bowl in the game already from square leg?
  - what is the pitch like, is it bouncy or keeping low?

### Tips on making your decision.

- Judge every ball on its merits – make no assumptions or have preconceived ideas.
- **Give yourself time** to replay the delivery and see...
  - pitch mark
  - point of impact
  - type of shot
  - path after impact
- Practice your timing at training or ask your partner for feedback. A quick decision gives the perception of not giving enough consideration; a slow decision gives the perception of doubt.
- Never succumb to pressure – giving decisions based on individual merit will gain you respect and increase your confidence.
- When giving a batter out, look at the batter and leave your finger up for a couple of seconds – make sure everyone knows he's out and you're not afraid to say so.

**Tips before / during every delivery.**

- Note where is the batter standing in relation to the stumps – middle or leg and if she/he is standing out of the popping crease.
- Note where the bowler delivered the ball from – out wide, or in close.
- Note the batter's style – does he shuffle across, get well forward, half forward, etc. Is his first movement backwards or forwards and how does this relate to the popping crease?
- For a traditional LH batter and a right arm over the wicket bowler – note where the bowler is the delivering the ball from (and unless he is bowling inswingers) and what length he has to bowl for it to pitch at least in line with leg stump.
- For a left arm over the wicket bowler to a traditional RH batter, note a spot on the pitch that will give you a good guide to where leg stump is. If the bowler does not swing the ball, consider the length (how far up) he has to pitch it for it to at least pitch in line with leg stump.