



14U+ Playbook

The Road Map for Success

- By Jason Saulsbury
 - Head Baseball Coach – Anoka Ramsey Community College

A Word From Jason Saulsbury

Coaches,

Thank you for volunteering to coach this great game to our youth! It is only with your help that the ABA is able to continue to improve our program year after year!

After years of being involved through various ABA coaching and board positions; the one recurring thing I see across our association is that we do not have any consistent style of play defined for our coaches or our teams. So, with that being said, this playbook was designed to assist our coaches to implement the “Andover Way” of baseball. Now, this will serve as a guide to you and does not limit you as a coach to teaching other aspects/areas. It does, however, serve as a backbone to what should be taught and executed at ages 14+.

After reviewing this information, if you should have any questions, please feel free to contact the coach & player development director or the travel director.

Again, thank you for your dedication and commitment to our youth and to the Andover Baseball Association. Good luck this season!

“Hit it in the gap and stretch it into three”

Jason Saulsbury

Head Baseball Coach – Anoka Ramsey Community College

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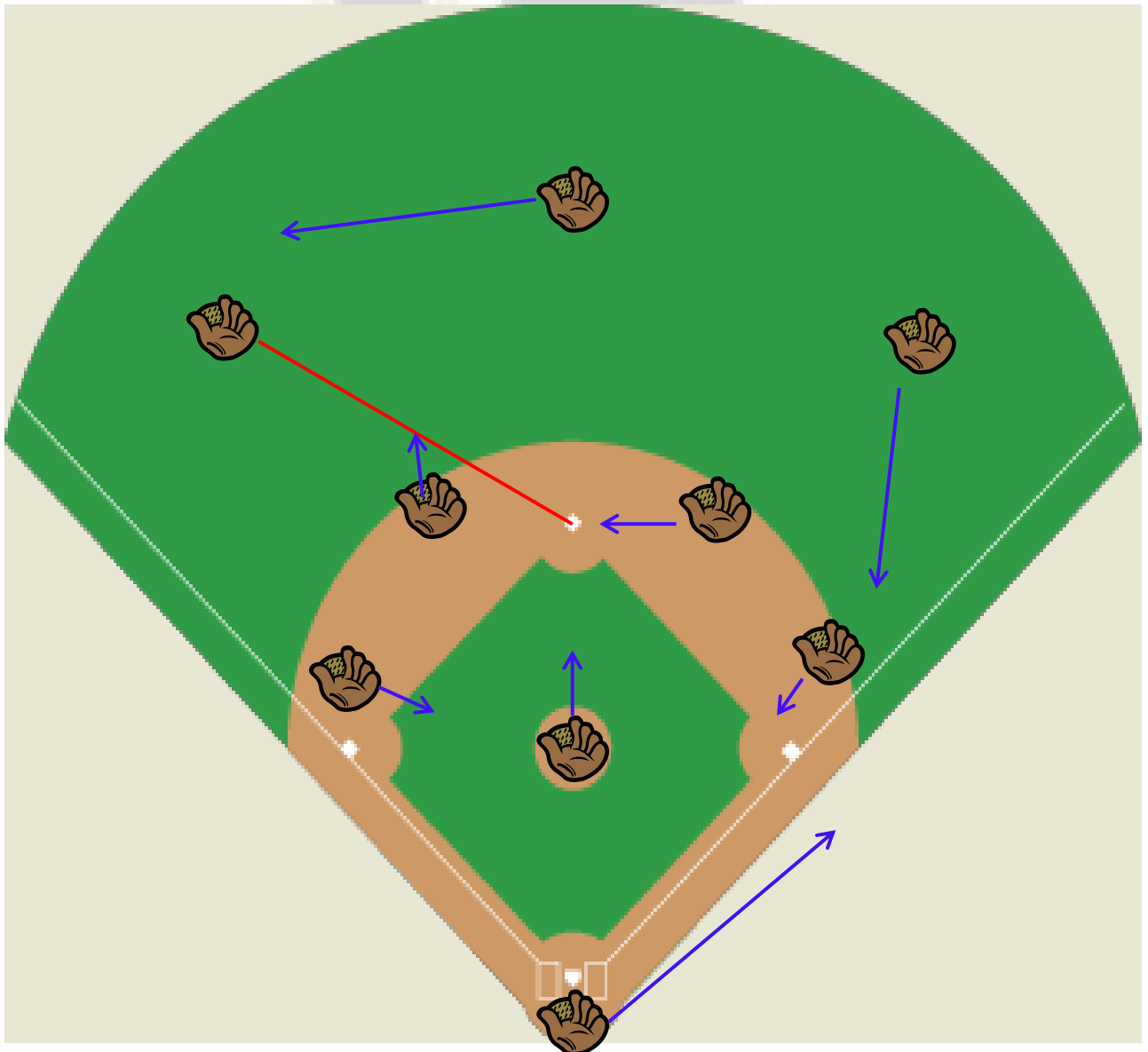


Cutoff Assignments

Cutoff Assignments

No Runners on and a single is hit to Left

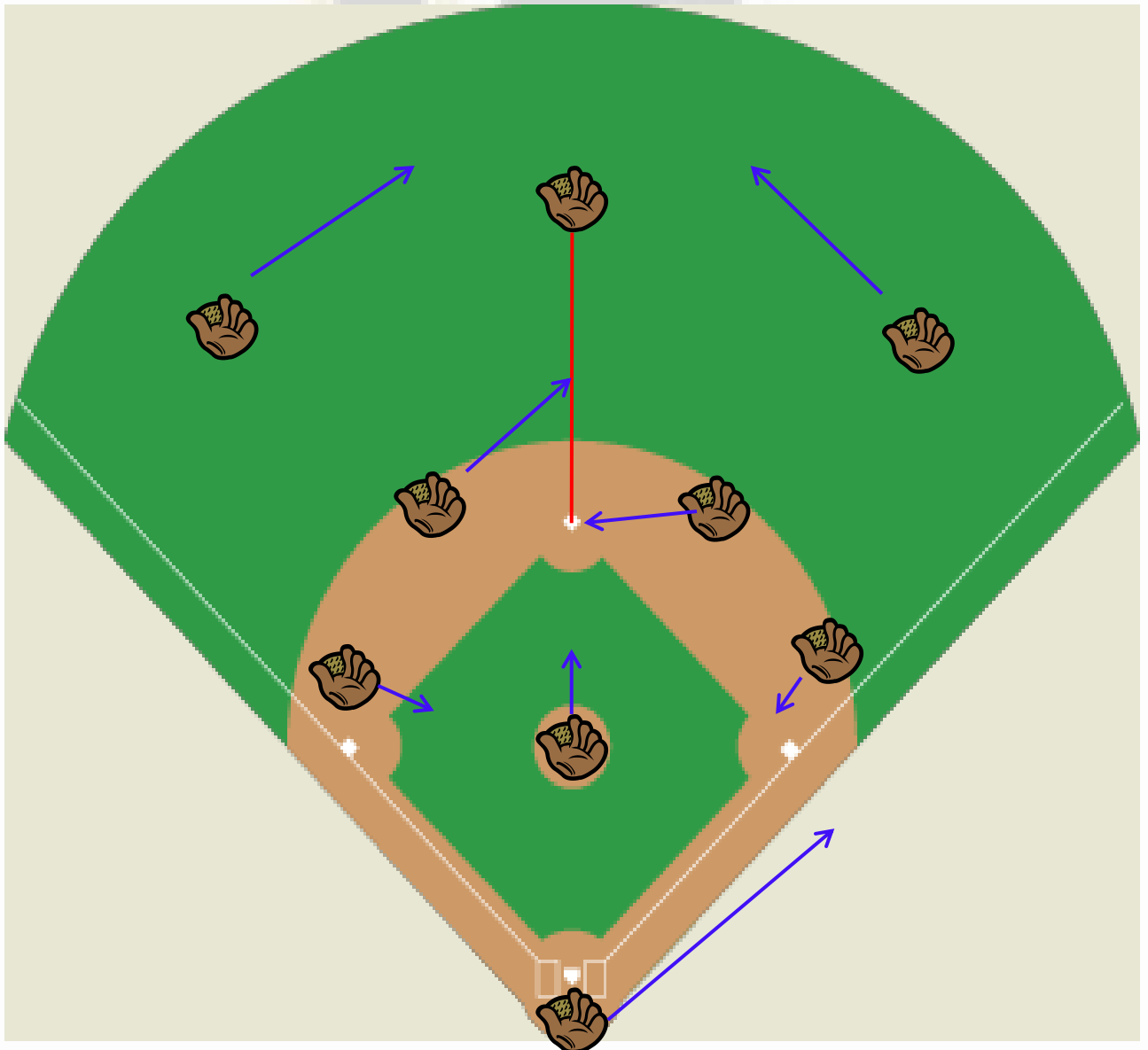
In this situation, the SS is the cutoff and 2B will cover second base. All the arrows indicate where the fielders move to backup the play. Take note that the C will trail the runner and back up first base.



Cutoff Assignments

No Runners on and a single hit to Center

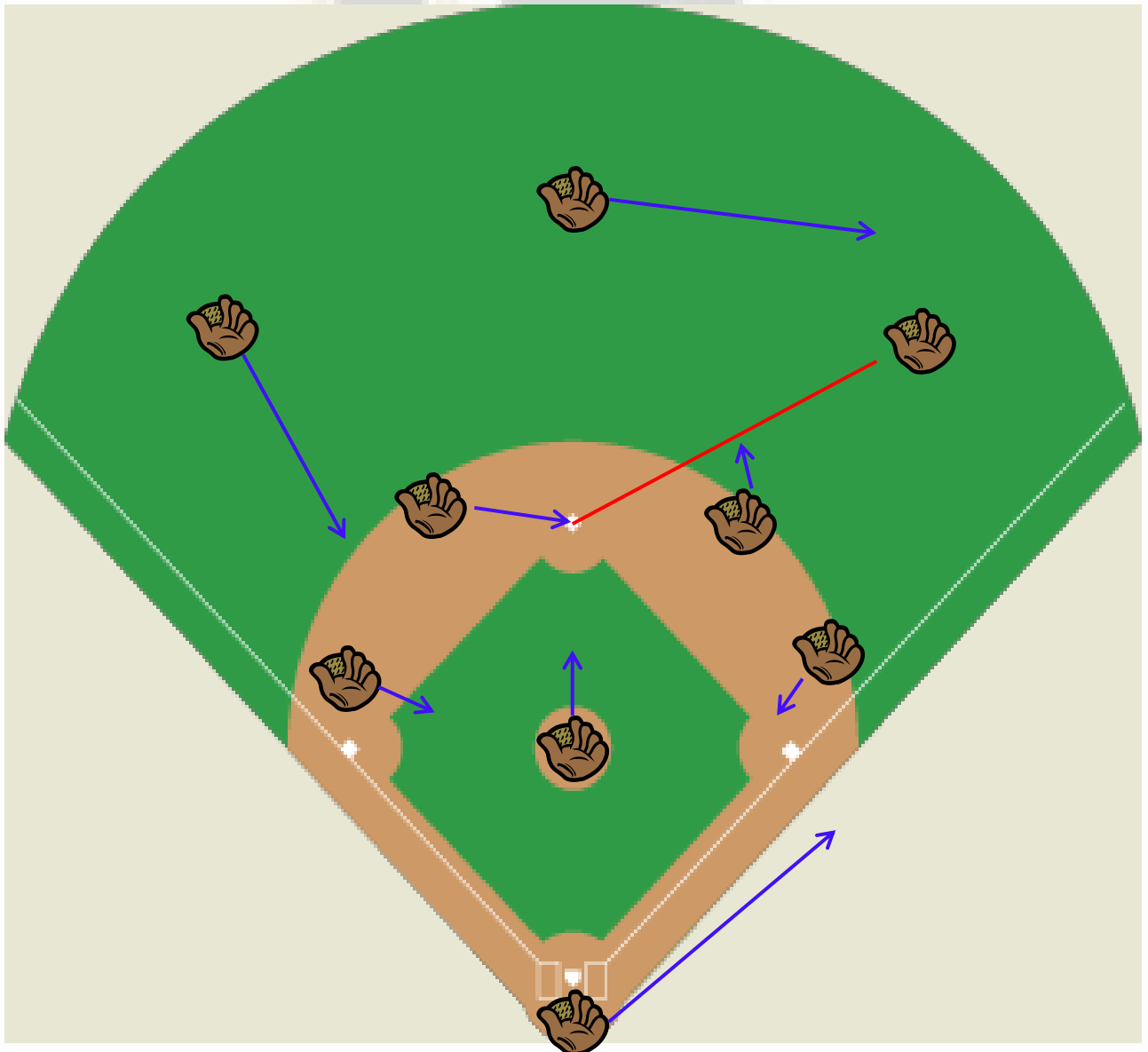
In this situation, the SS is the cutoff and 2B will cover second base. All the arrows indicate where the fielders move to backup the play. Take note that the C will trail the runner and back up first base.



Cutoff Assignments

No Runners on and a single hit to Right

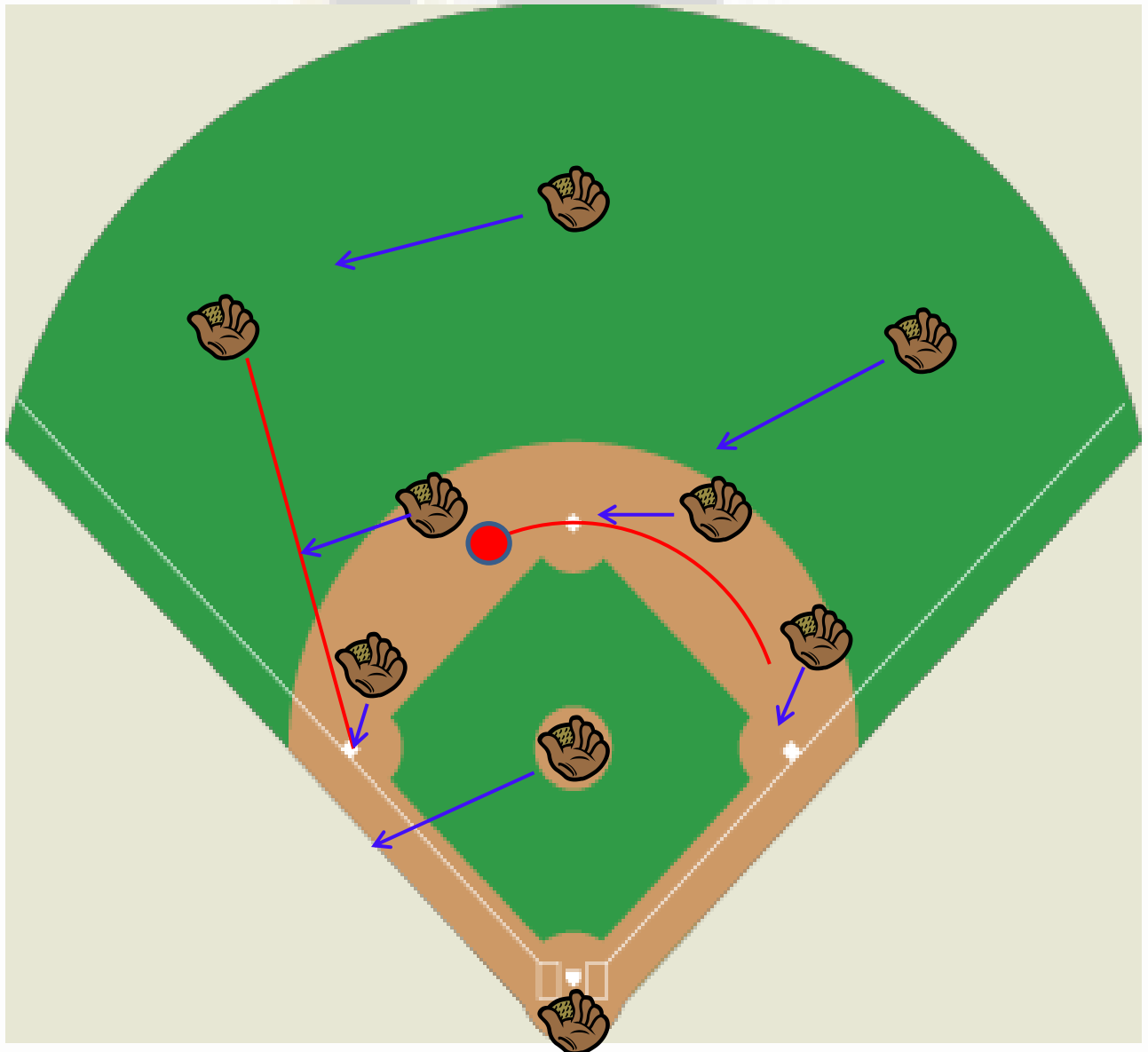
In this situation, the 2B is the cutoff and SS will cover second base. All the arrows indicate where the fielders move to backup the play. Take note that the C will trail the runner and back up first base.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 1st and a single hit to Left

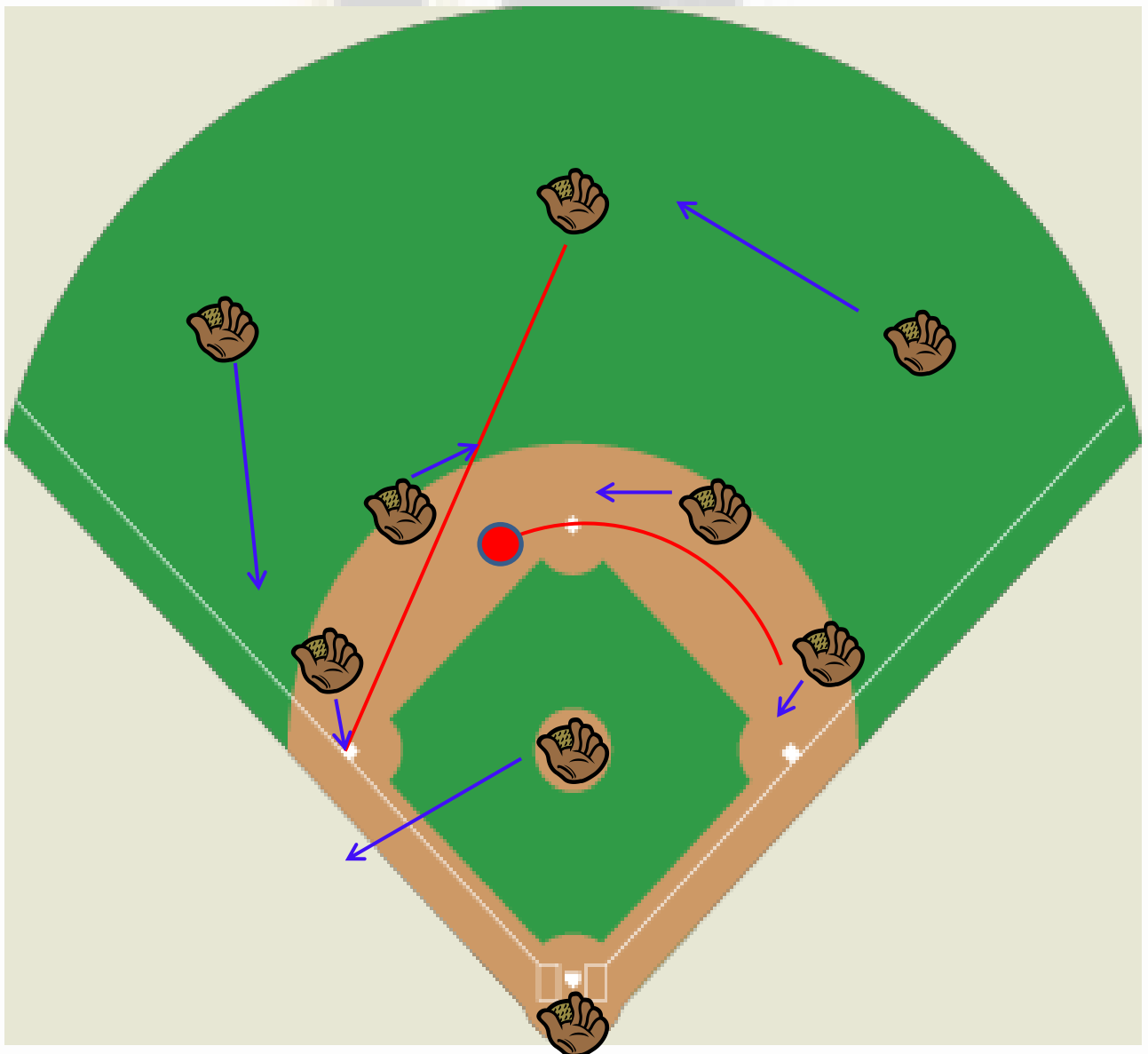
In this situation, the SS is the cutoff and 2B will cover second base. All the arrows indicate where the fielders move to backup the play. Take note that the P will be backing up the throw to third base.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 1st and a single hit to Center

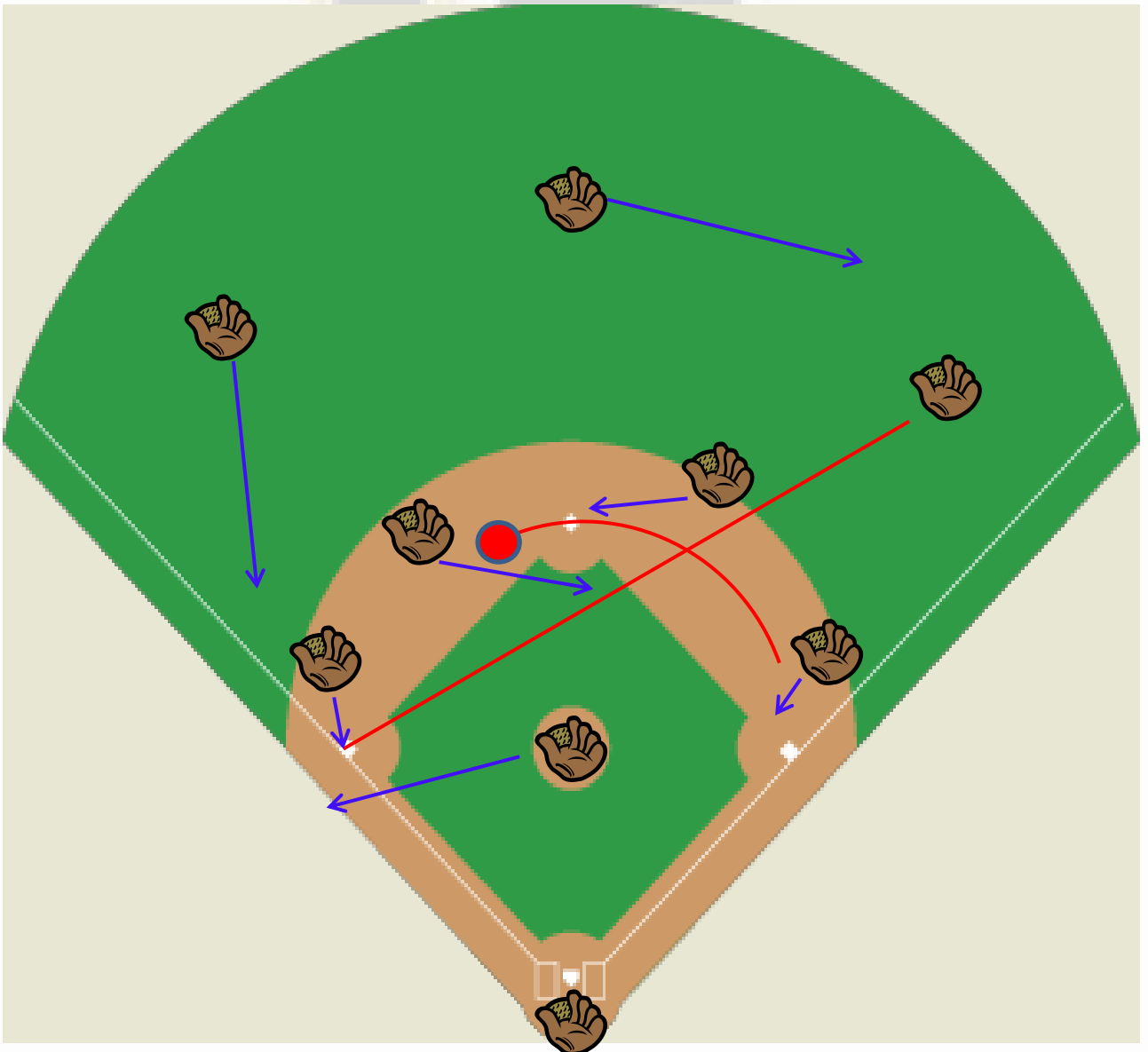
In this situation, the SS is the cutoff and 2B will cover second base. All the arrows indicate where the fielders move to backup the play. Take note that the P will be backing up the throw to third base.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 1st and a single hit to Right

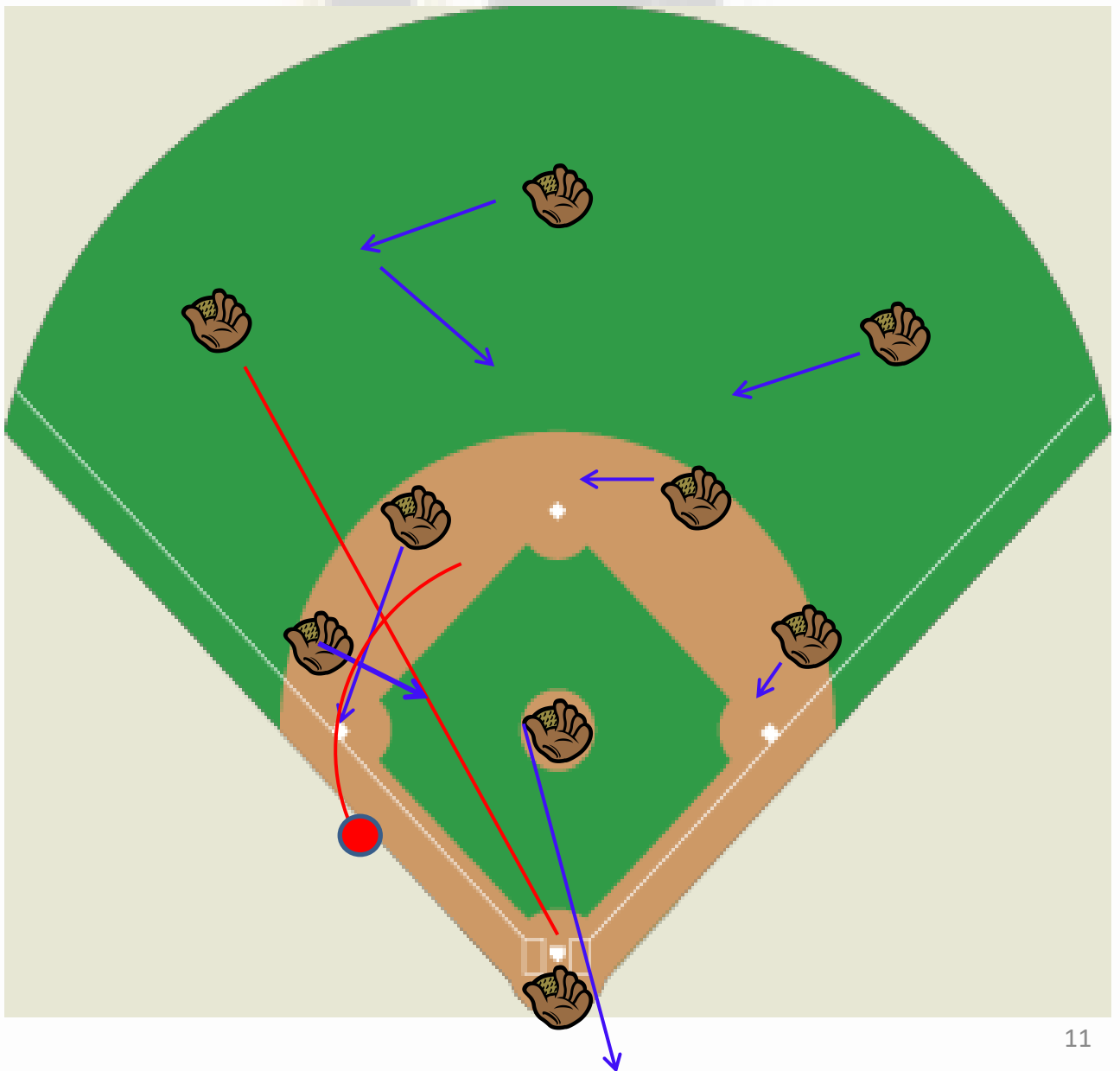
In this situation, the SS is the cutoff and 2B will cover second base. All the arrows indicate where the fielders move to backup the play. Take note that the P will be backing up the throw to third base.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 2nd and a single hit to Left

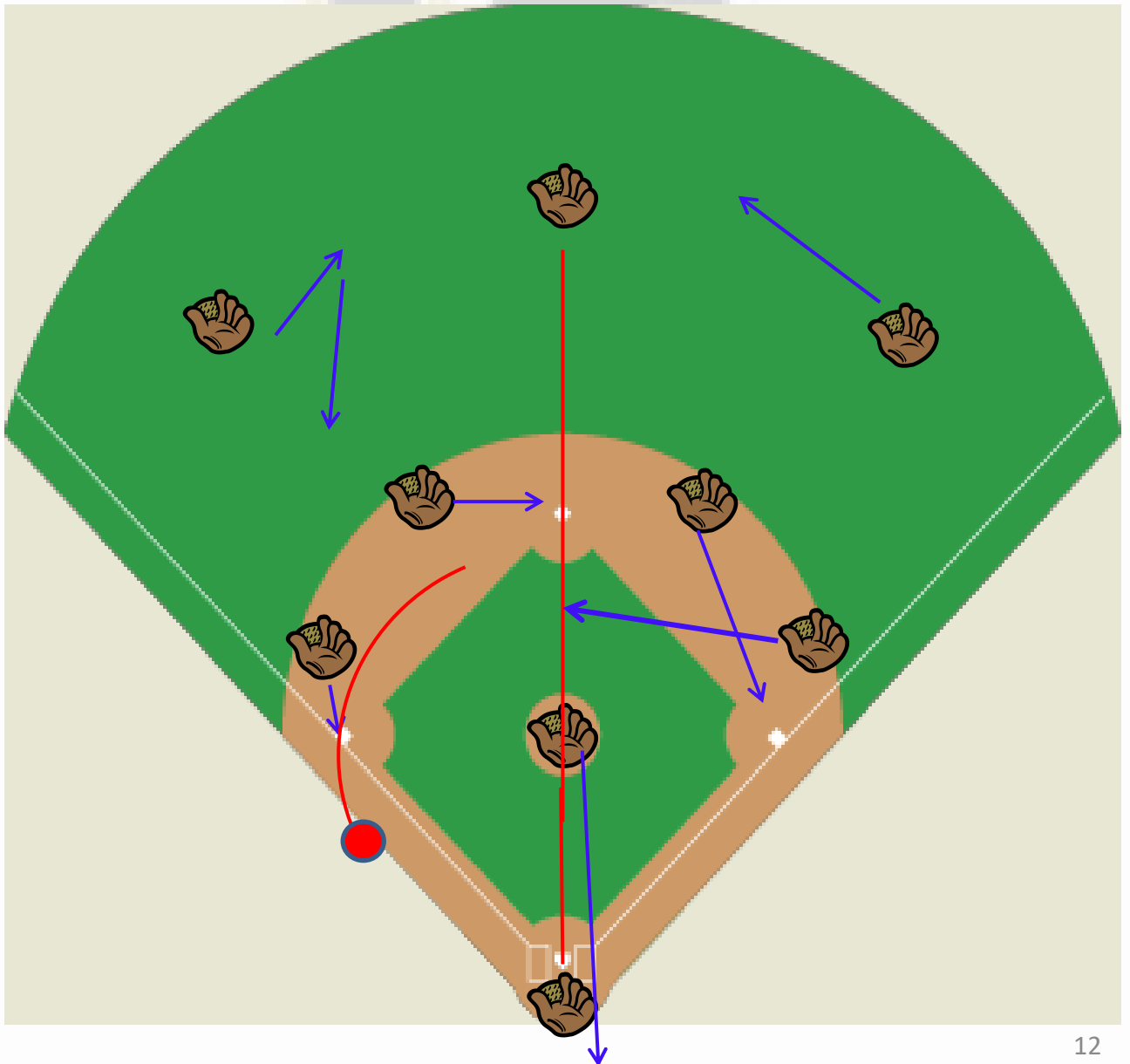
At the 14U+ level, we want our 3B to be the cutoff to the play at home with a ball hit to the left side. The SS will cover third base, 2B will cover second base, and the P will backup the throw behind home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 2nd and a single hit to Center

The 1B is the cutoff to the play at home with a ball hit to the center field. The SS will cover second, 2B will cover 1B, and the P will backup the throw behind home plate.



a single hit to Right

to the play at home with a ball

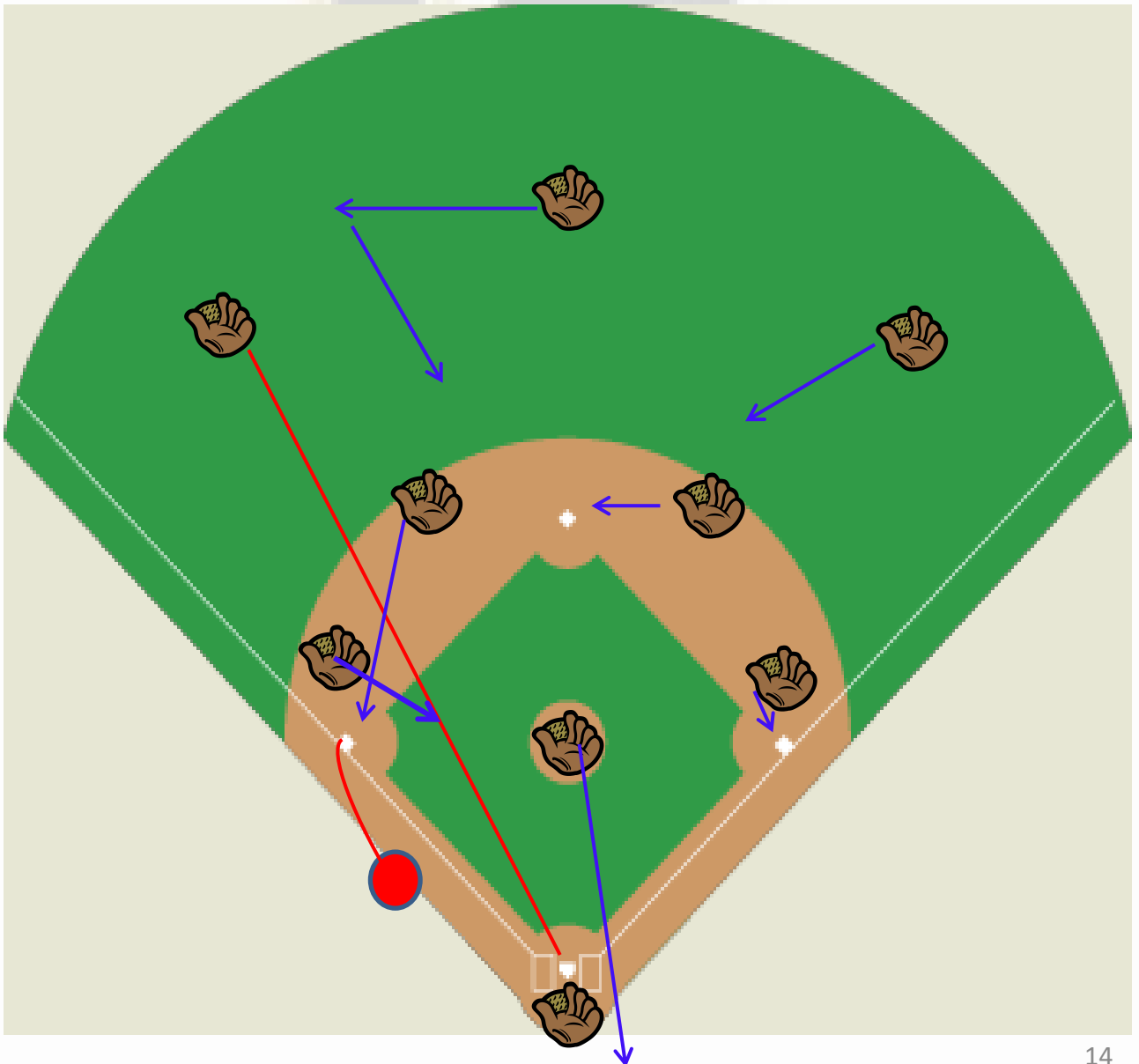
cond, 2B will cover 1B, and the



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 3rd and a fly ball hit to Left

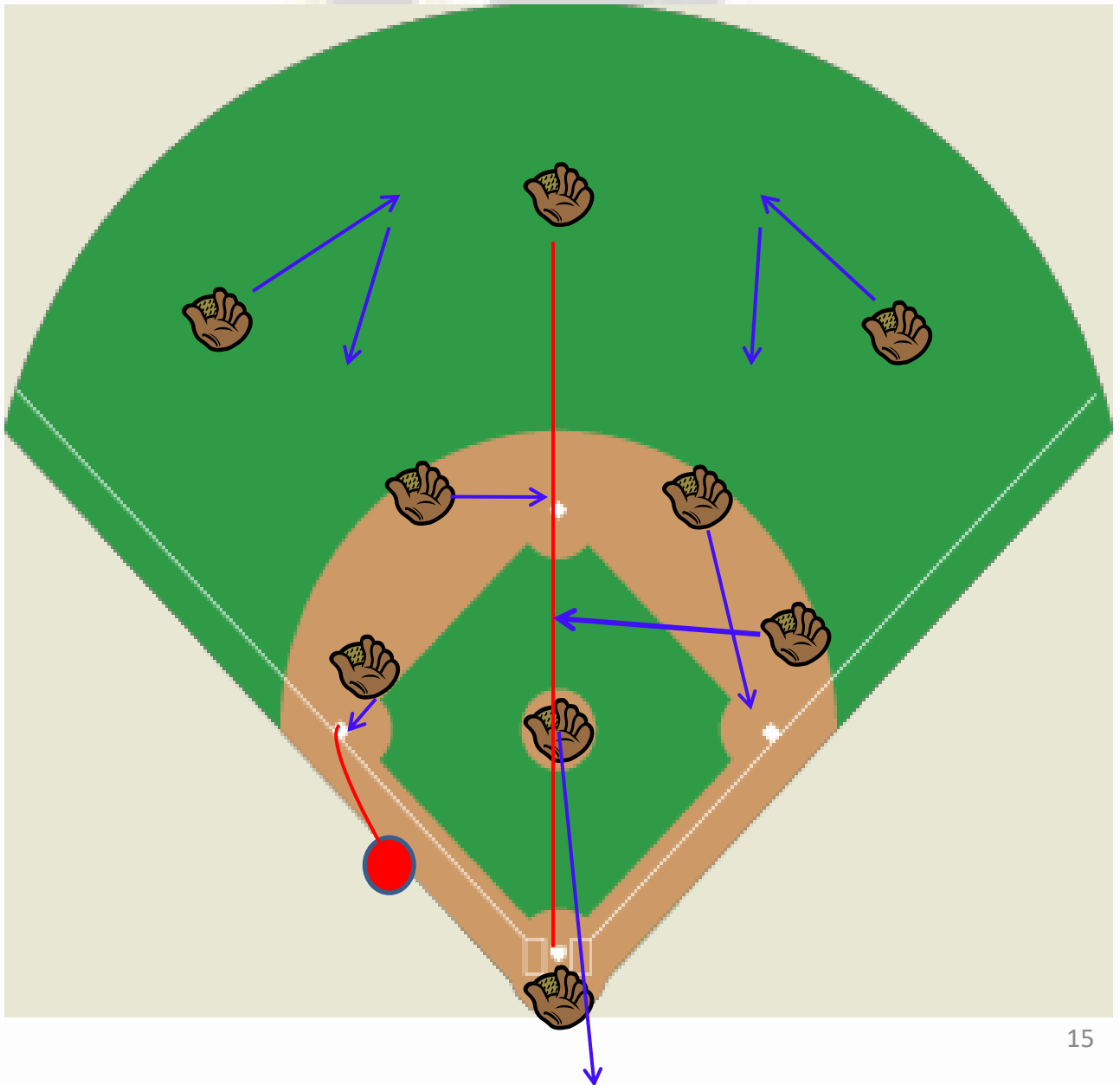
The 3B is the cutoff to the play at home. The SS will cover third base, 2B will cover second base. The P should move behind home plate to backup the throw.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 3rd and a fly ball hit to Center

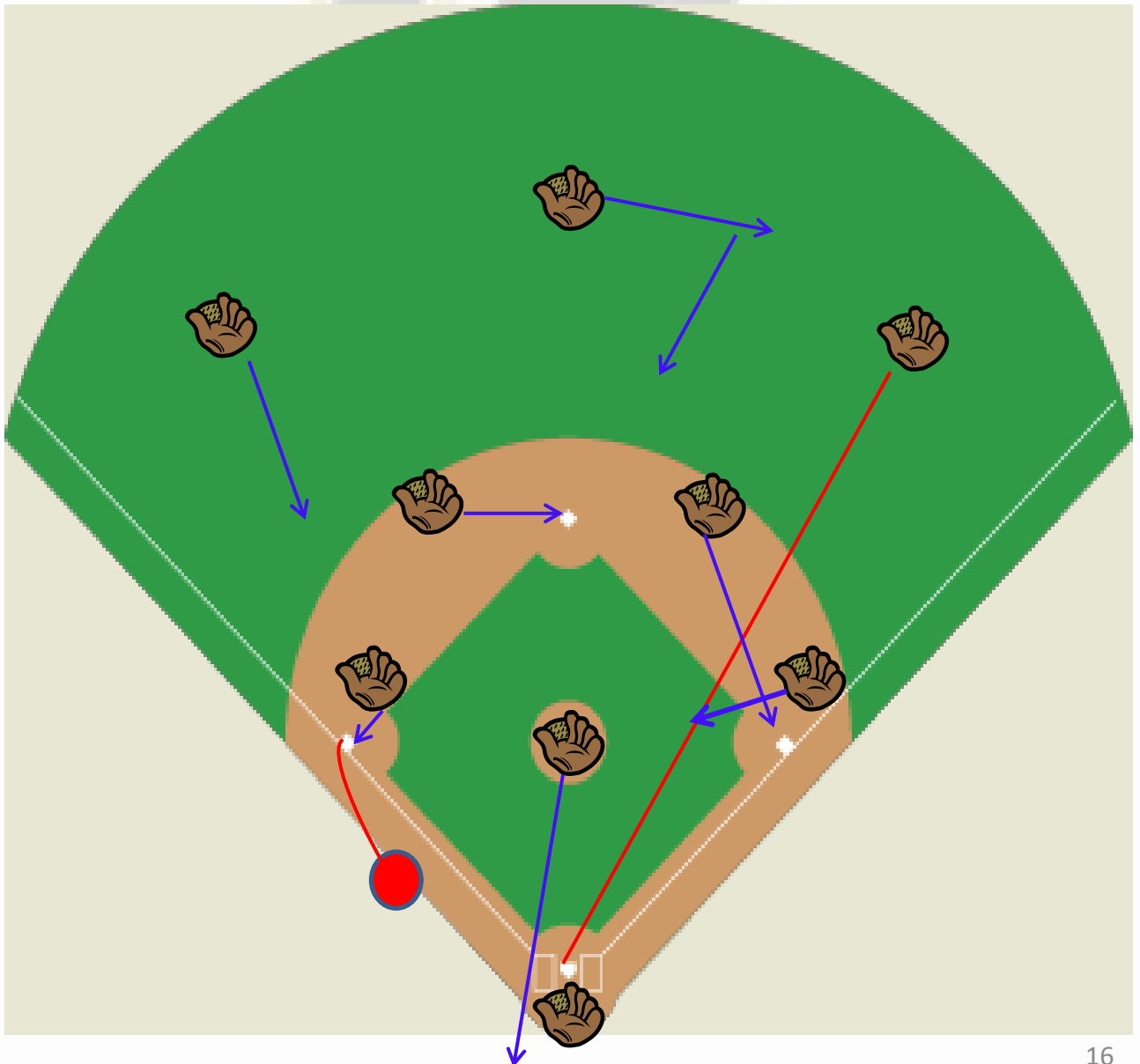
The 1B is the cutoff to the play at home. The SS will cover second base, 2B will cover first base. The P should move behind home plate to backup the throw.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 3rd and a fly ball hit to Right

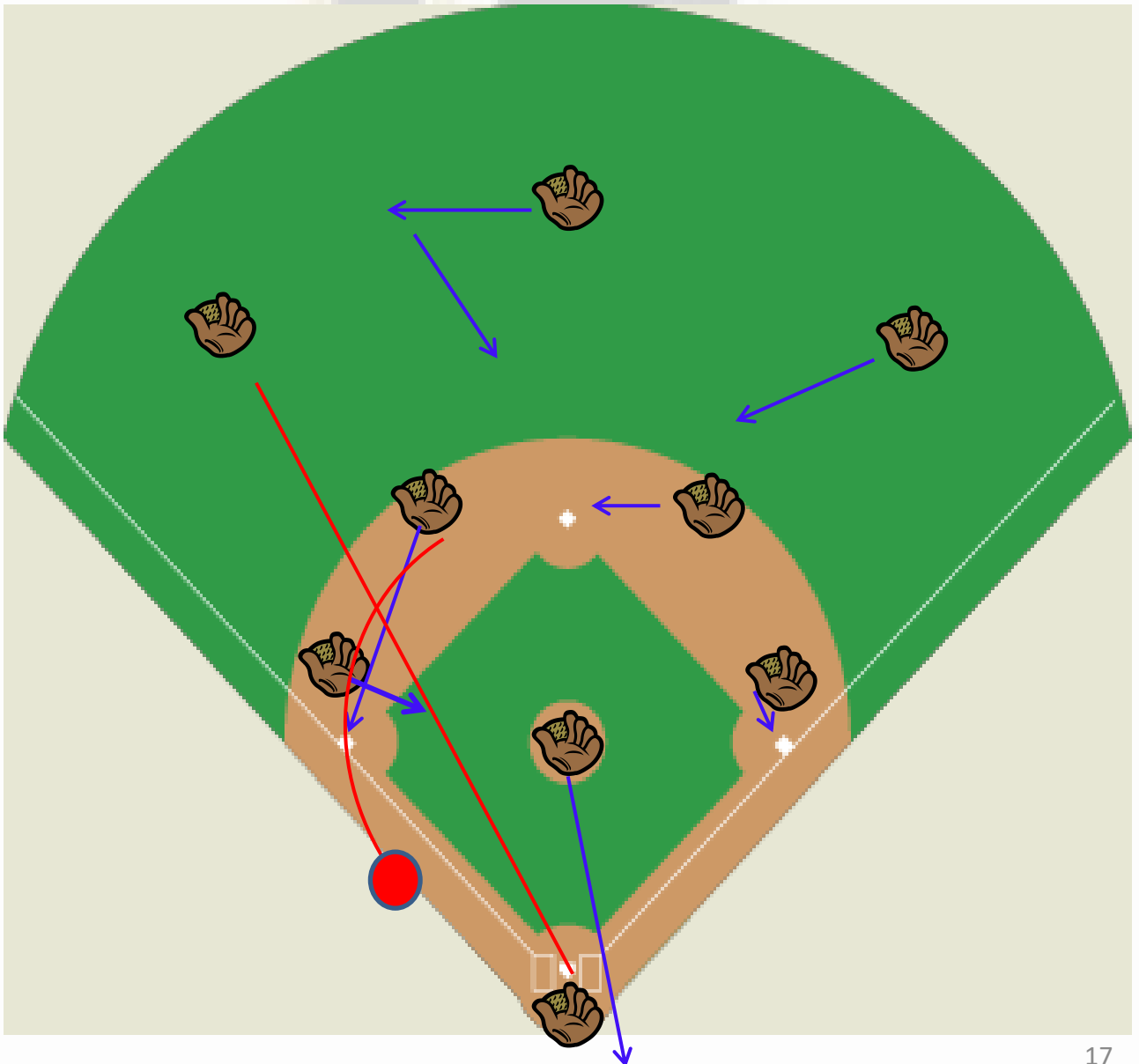
The 1B is the cutoff to the play at home. The SS will cover second base, 2B will cover first base. The P should move behind home plate to backup the throw.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 2nd or 3rd and a ground ball hit to Left

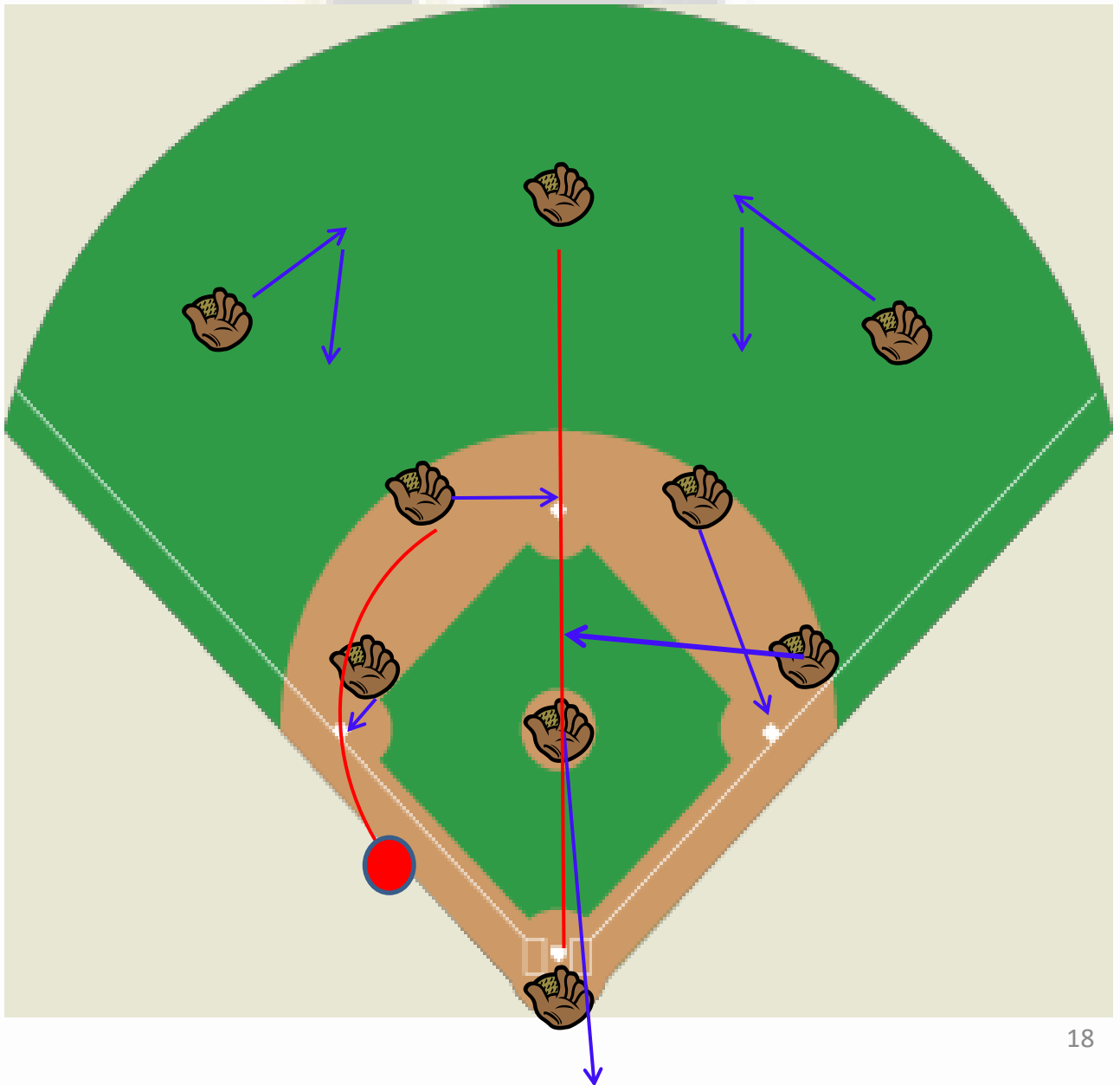
The 3B is the cutoff to the play at home plate. The SS will cover third base, 2B will cover second base. The pitcher should back up the play at home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 2nd or 3rd and a ground ball to Center

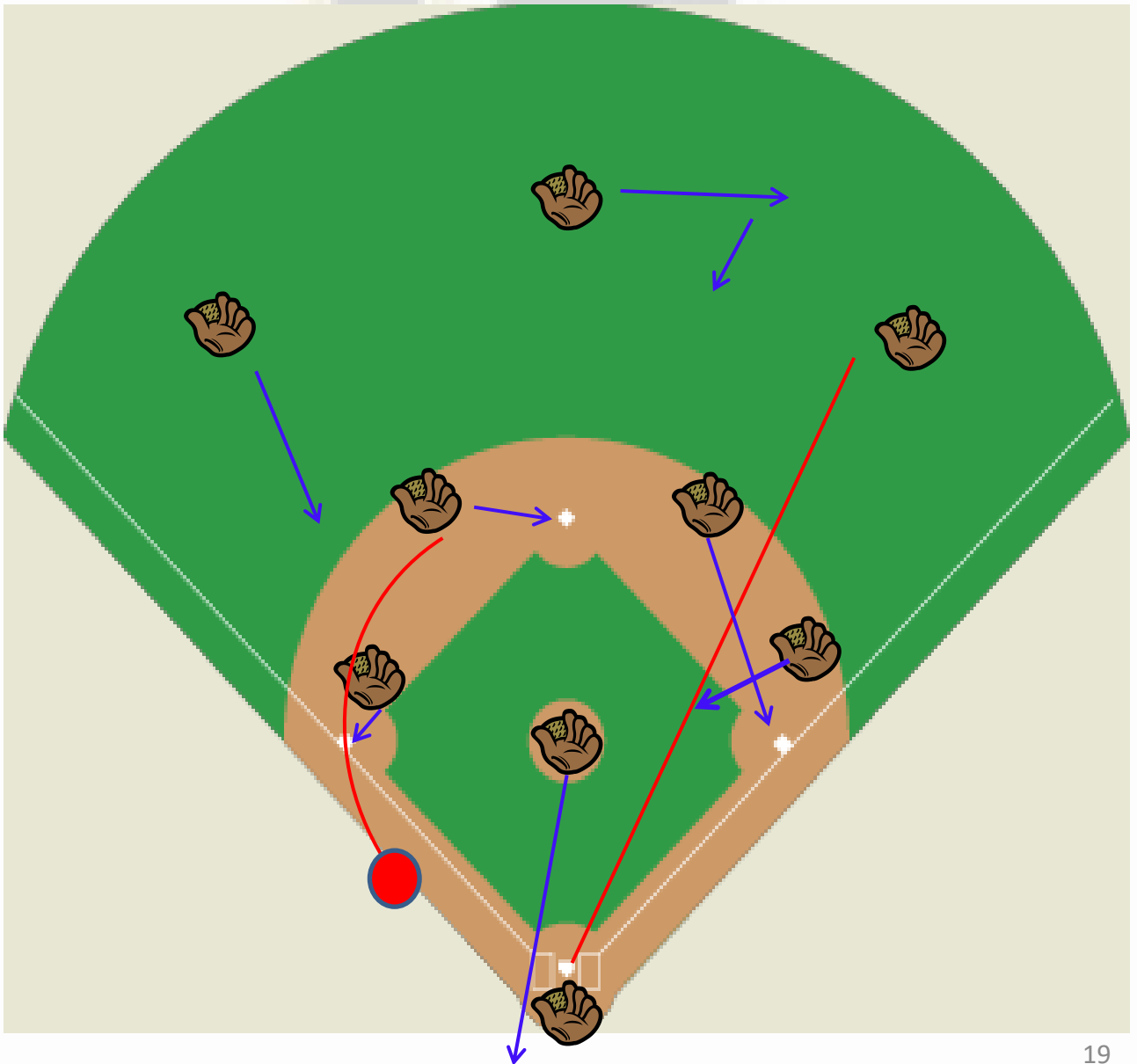
The 1B is the cutoff to the play at home plate. The SS will cover second base, 2B will cover first base. The pitcher should back up the play at home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Runner on 2nd or 3rd and a ground ball to Right

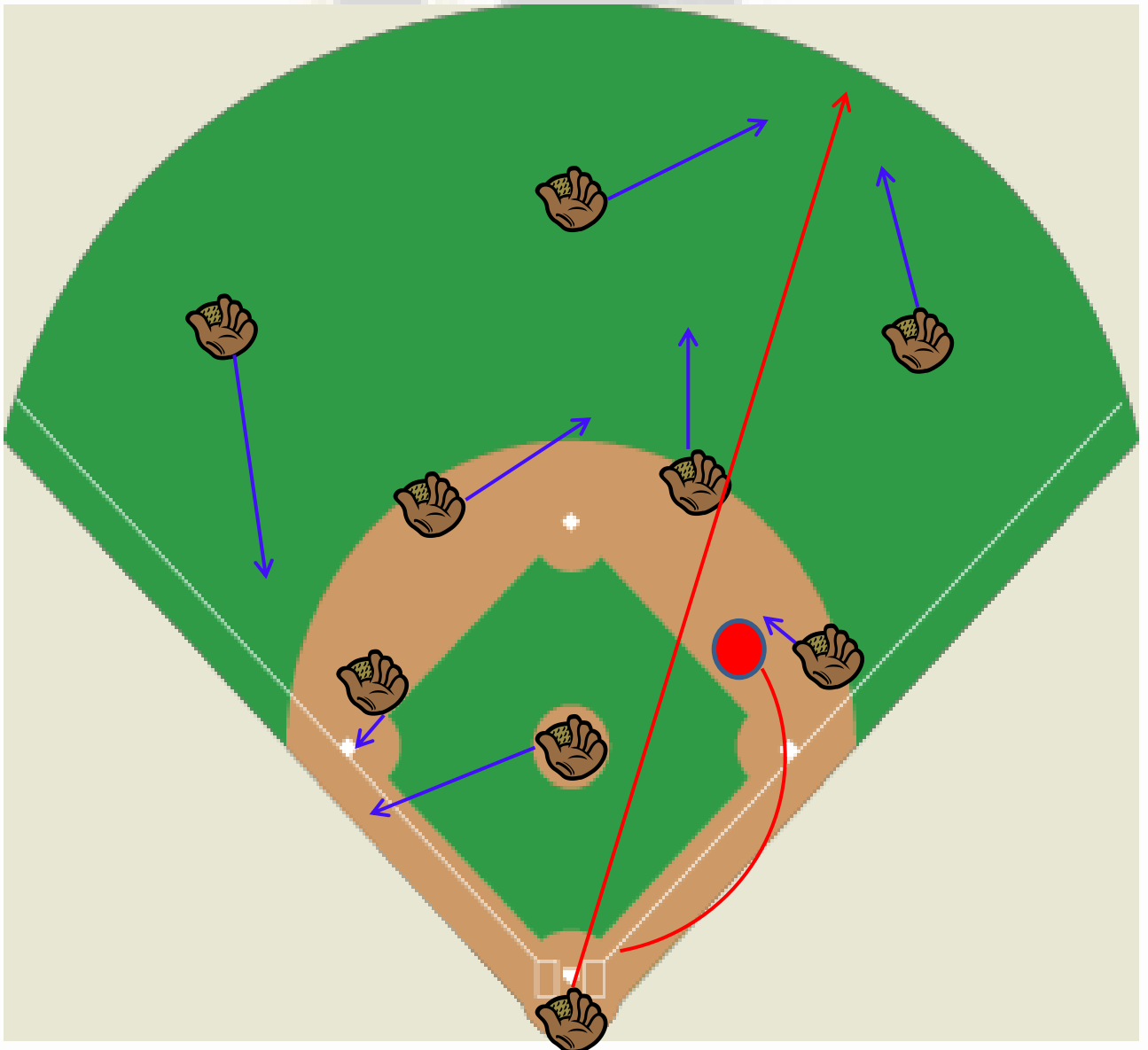
The 1B is the cutoff to the play at home plate. The SS will cover second base, 2B will cover first base. The pitcher should back up the play at home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Double to right center with no runners on base – Double Cut.

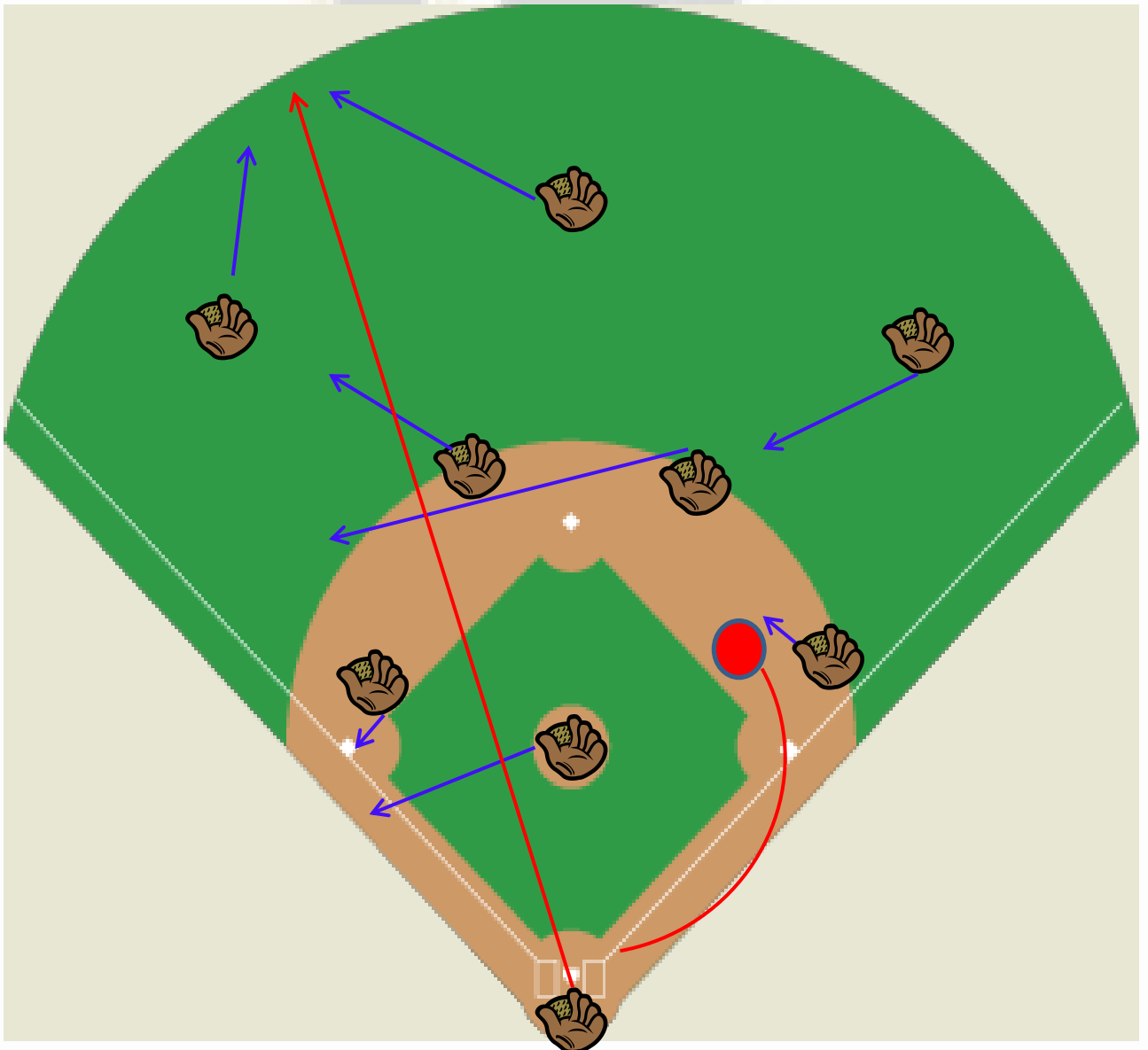
It this situation the 2B and SS will align with third base as the double cut scenario. The outfielder that fields the ball, should deliver the throw to the first cutoff man. The 1B should trail the runner that hit the double, in case there is a play at second base.



Cutoff Assignments

Double to left center with no runners on base – Double Cut.

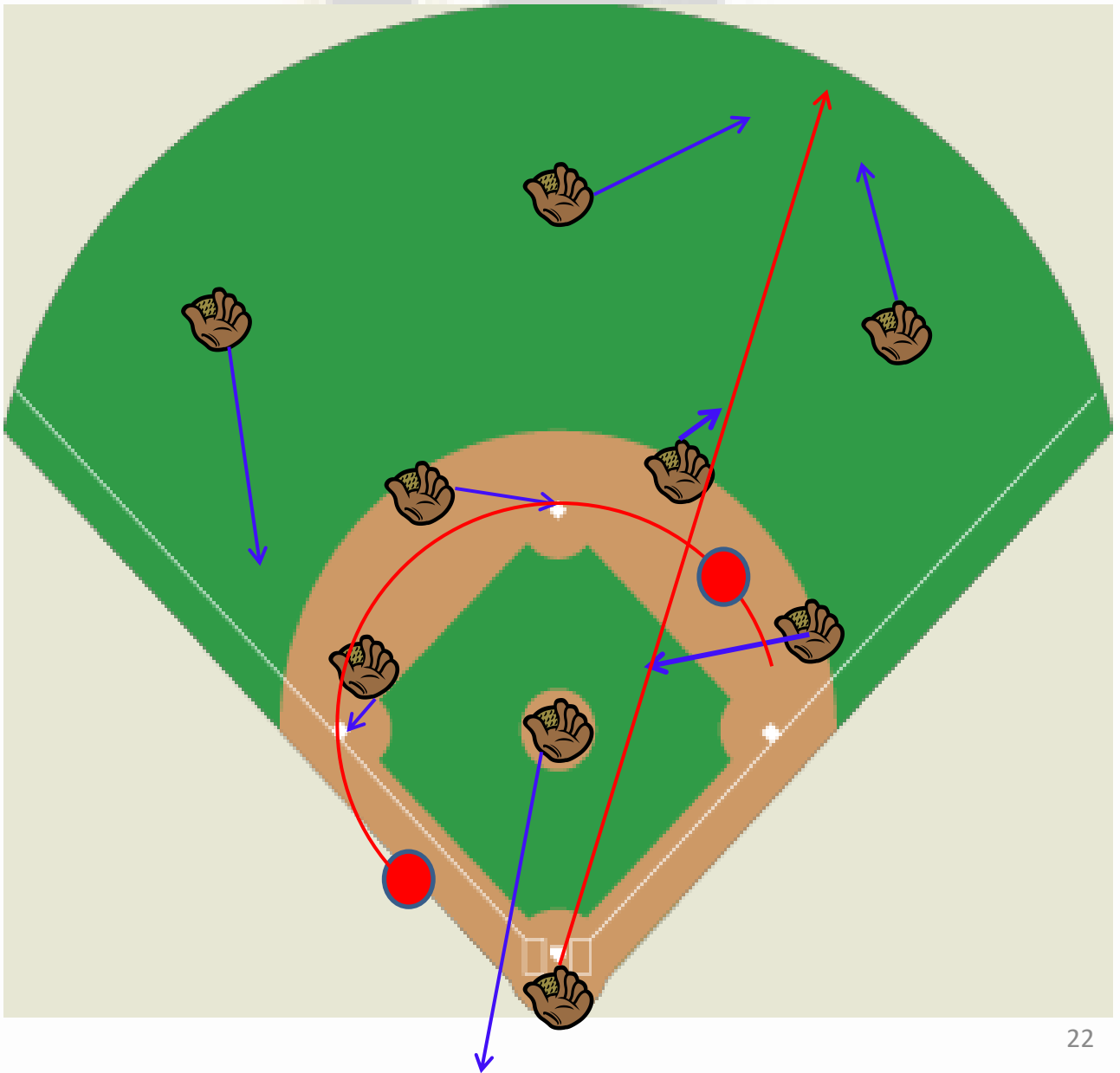
It this situation the 2B and SS will align with third base as the double cut scenario. The outfielder that fields the ball, should deliver the throw to the first cutoff man. The 1B should trail the runner that hit the double, in case there is a play at second base.



Cutoff Assignments

Double to right center with a runner on first base – Double Cut.

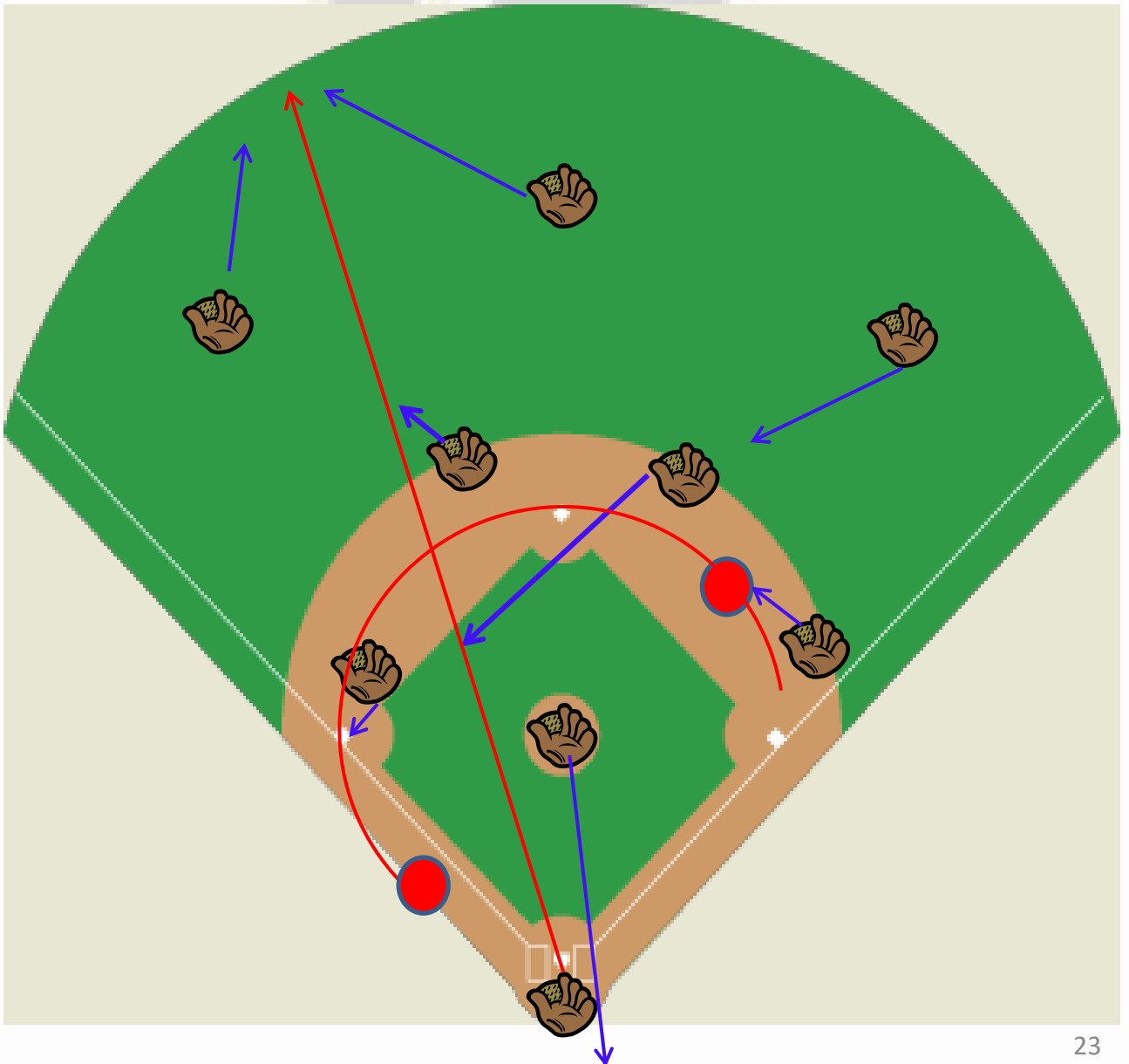
In this situation the 2B and 1B will align with home as the double cut scenario. The outfielder that fields the ball, should deliver the throw to the first cutoff man. The SS will cover second base, in case there is a play there. The P will back up home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Double to left center with a runner on first base – Double Cut.

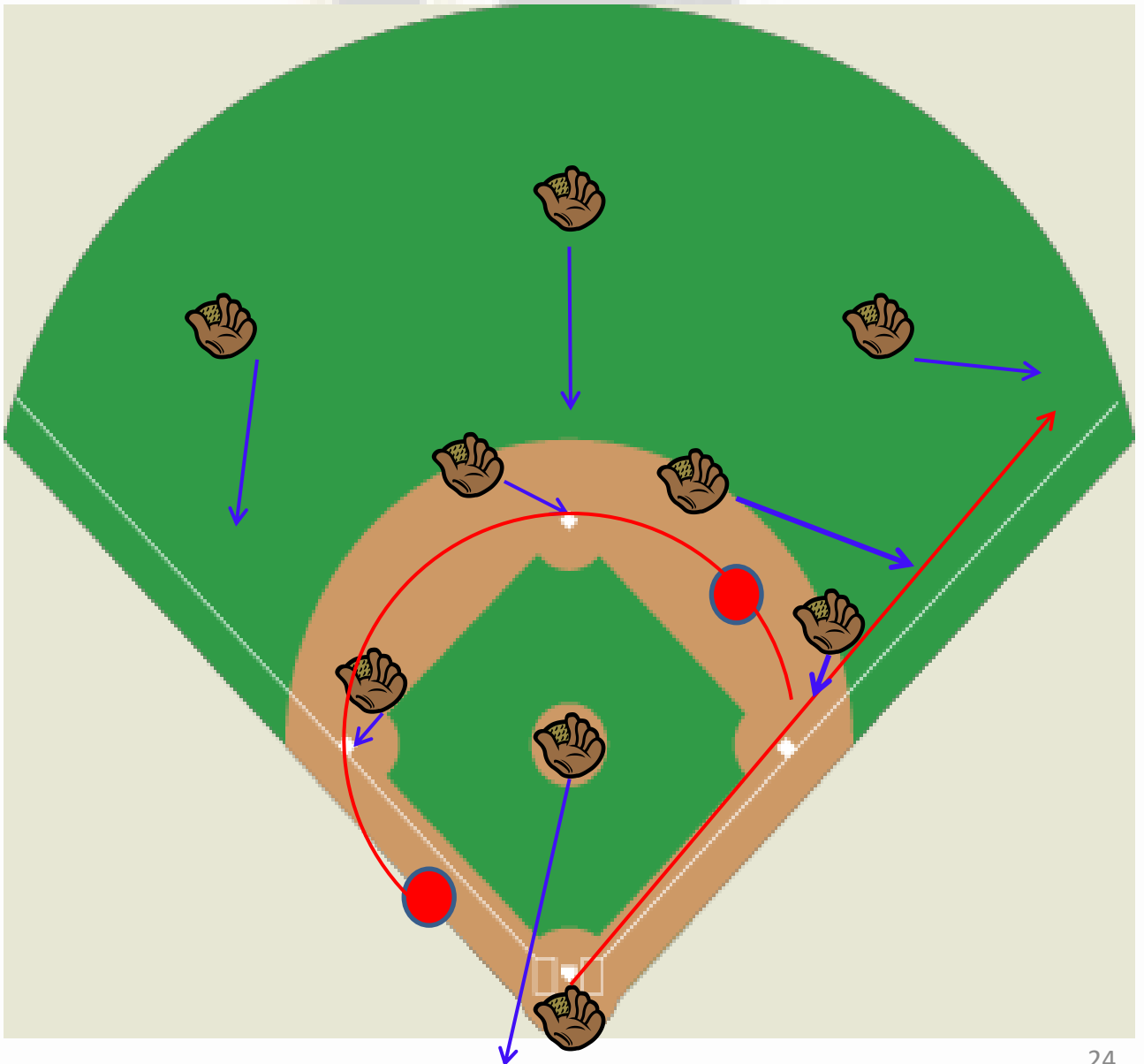
It this situation the SS and 2B will align with home as the double cut scenario. The outfielder that fields the ball, should deliver the throw to the first cutoff man. The 1B will trail the runner going to second base, in case there is a play there. The P will back up home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Double to right field with a runner on first base – Double Cut.

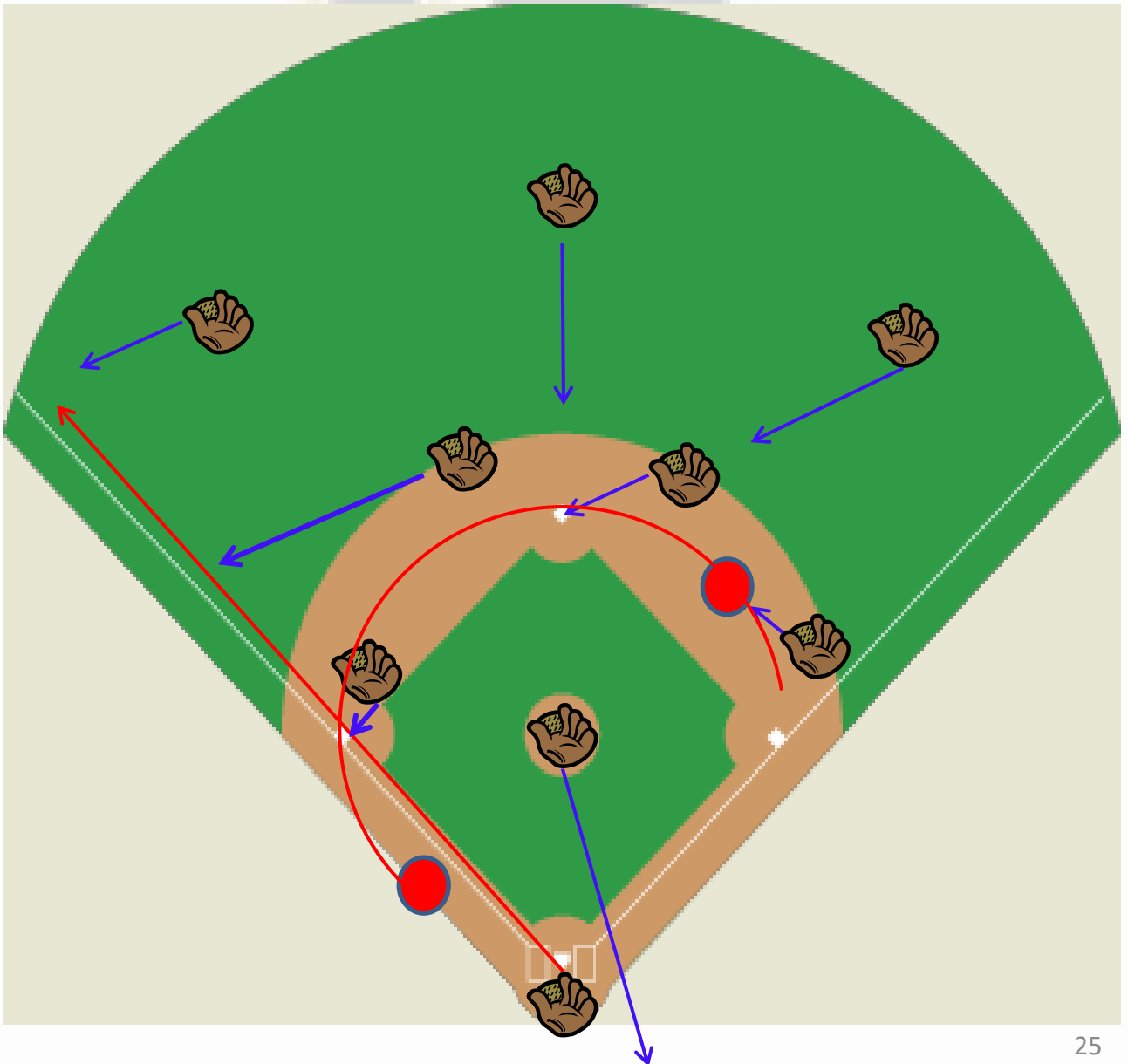
In this situation the 2B and 1B will align with home as the double cut scenario. The RF should deliver the throw to the first cutoff man. The SS will cover second base, in case there is a play there. The P will back up home plate.



Cutoff Assignments

Double to left field with a runner on first base – Double Cut.

In this situation the SS and 3B will align with home as the double cut scenario. The LF should deliver the throw to the first cutoff man. The 2B will cover second base, in case there is a play there. The P will back up home plate.

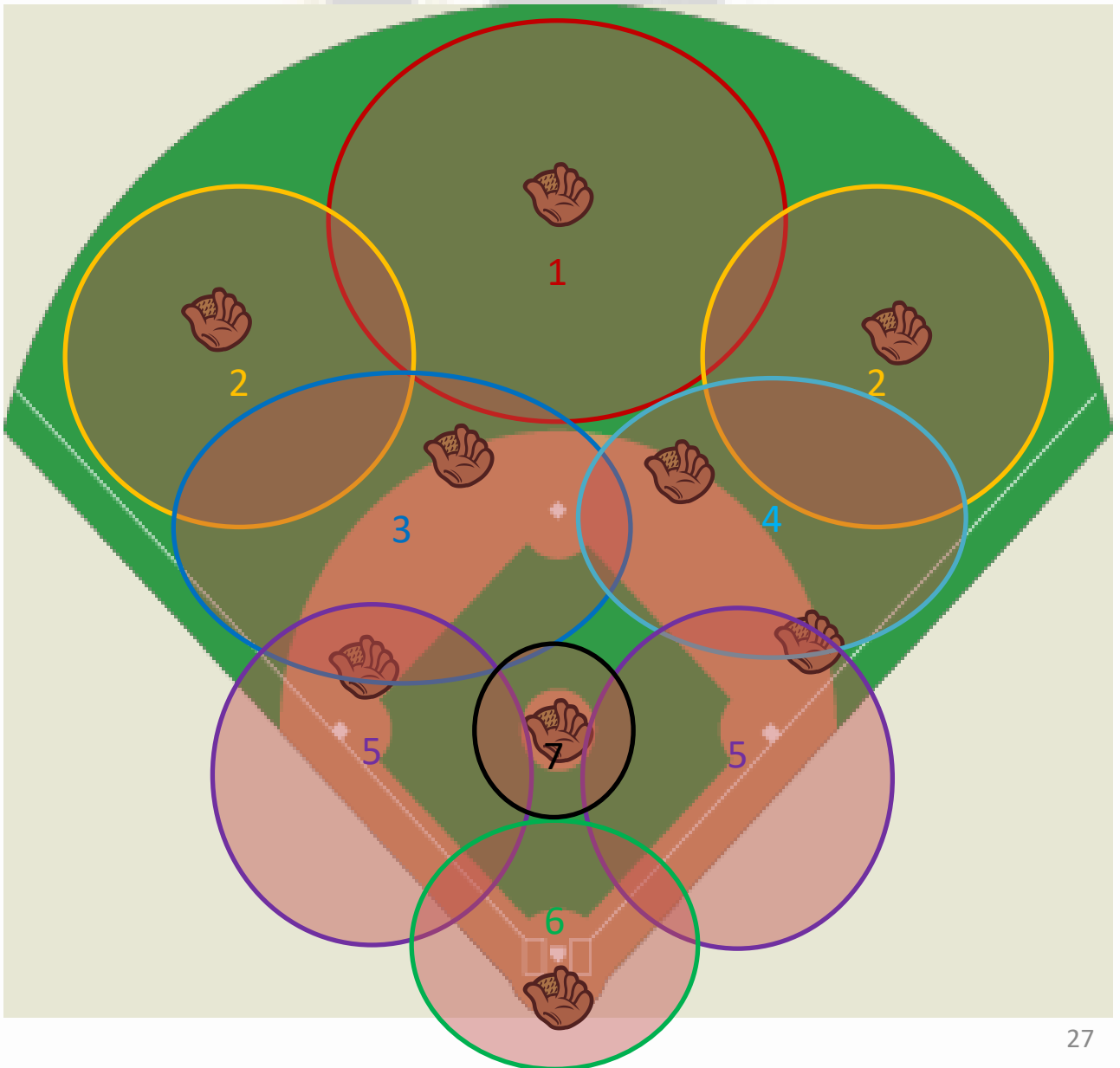




Pop Fly Priorities

Pop Fly Priorities

- ❖ Centerfielder has priority over the left and right fielders.
- ❖ Outfielders have priority over the infielders.
- ❖ Shortstop has priority over everyone in the infield.
- ❖ Middle infielders (SS and 2nd base) have priority over the corner infielders (1st base and 3rd base).
- ❖ Corner infielders have priority over the pitcher and catcher.

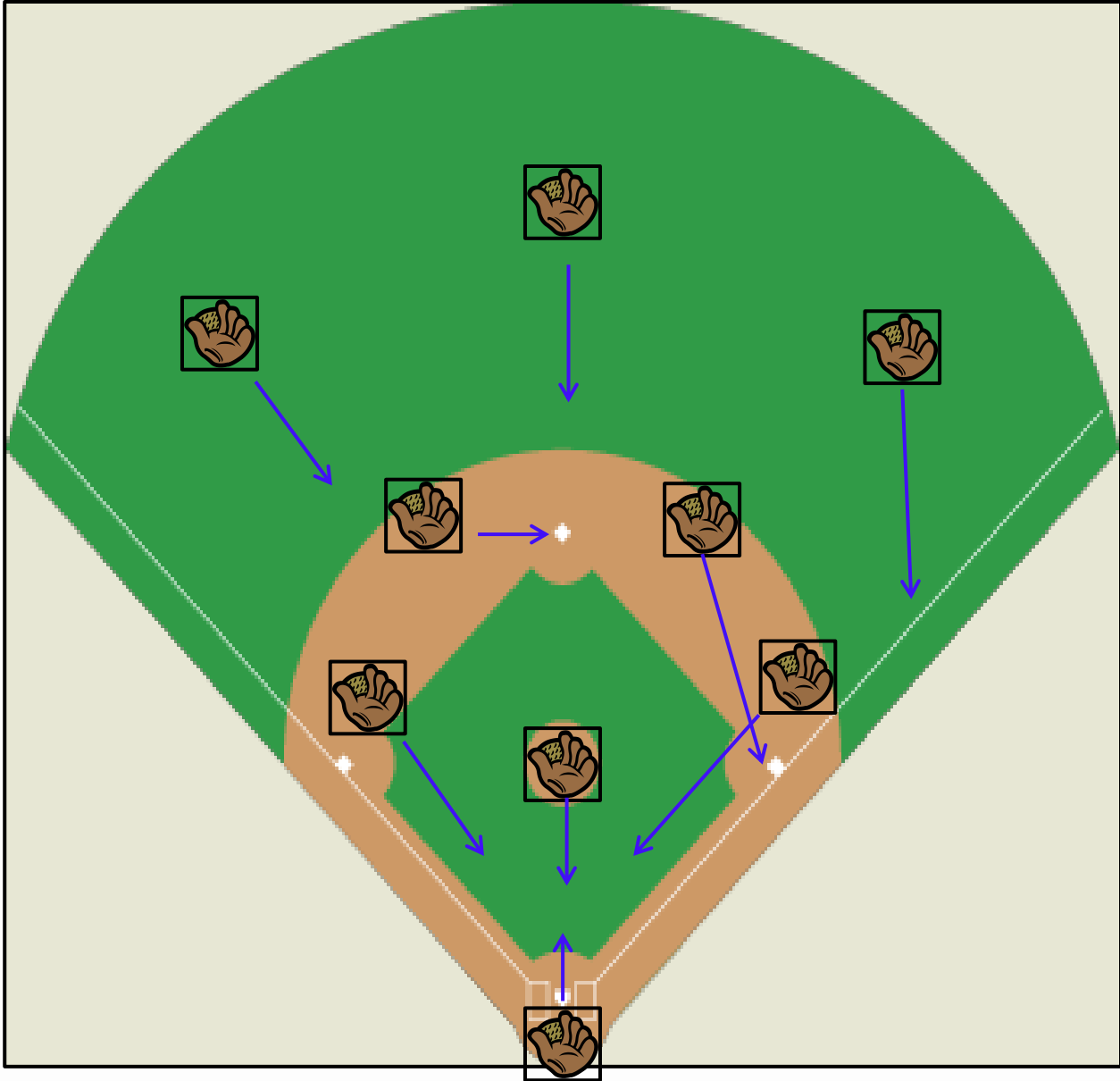




Bunt Defense

on base, or runner on first base
s, 2B covers first base, SS c
and the pitcher is responsible

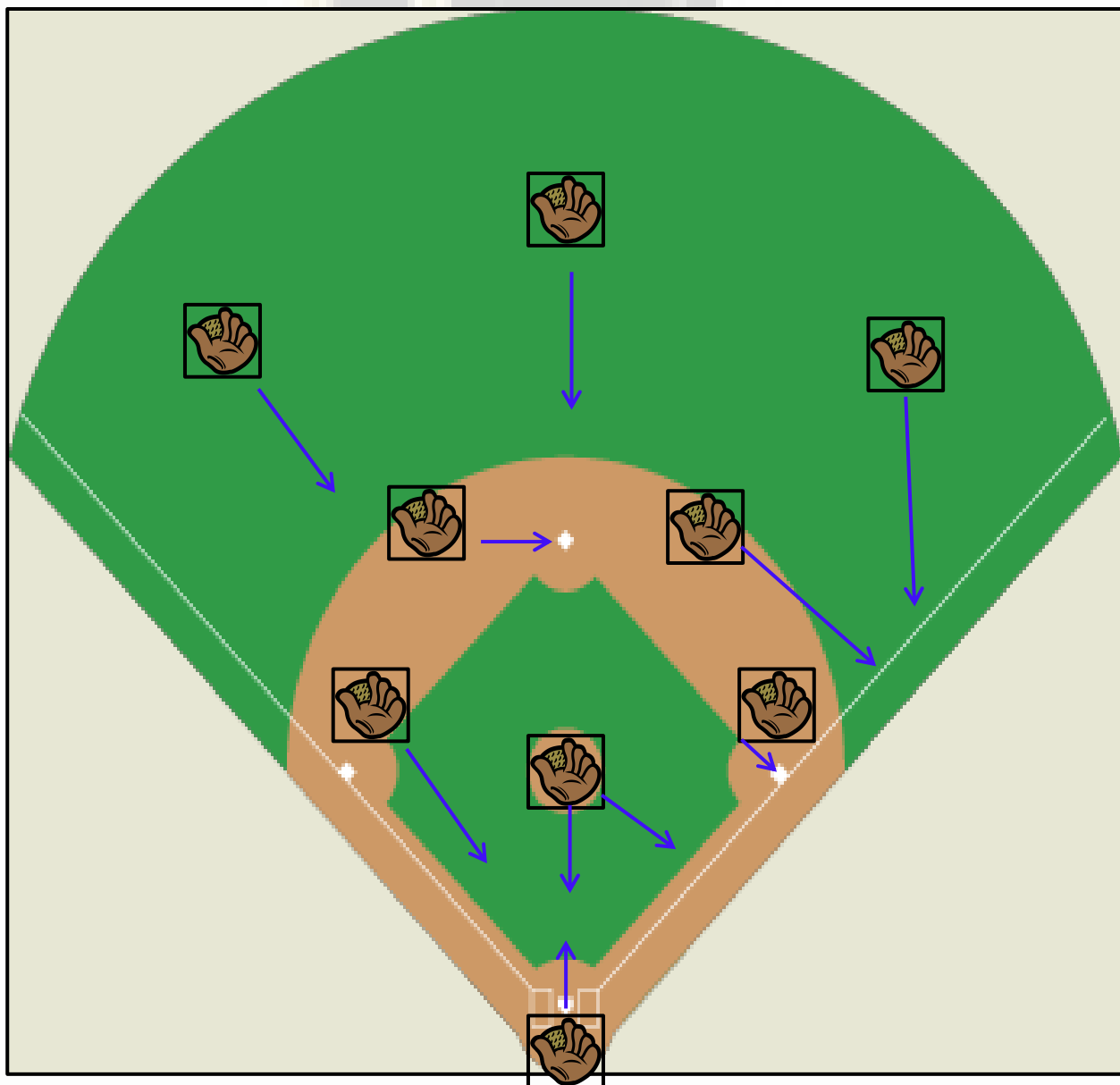
1 of 7 – No Runners on base, or runner on first base



Bunt Defense

2 of 7 – No Runners on base, or runner on first base

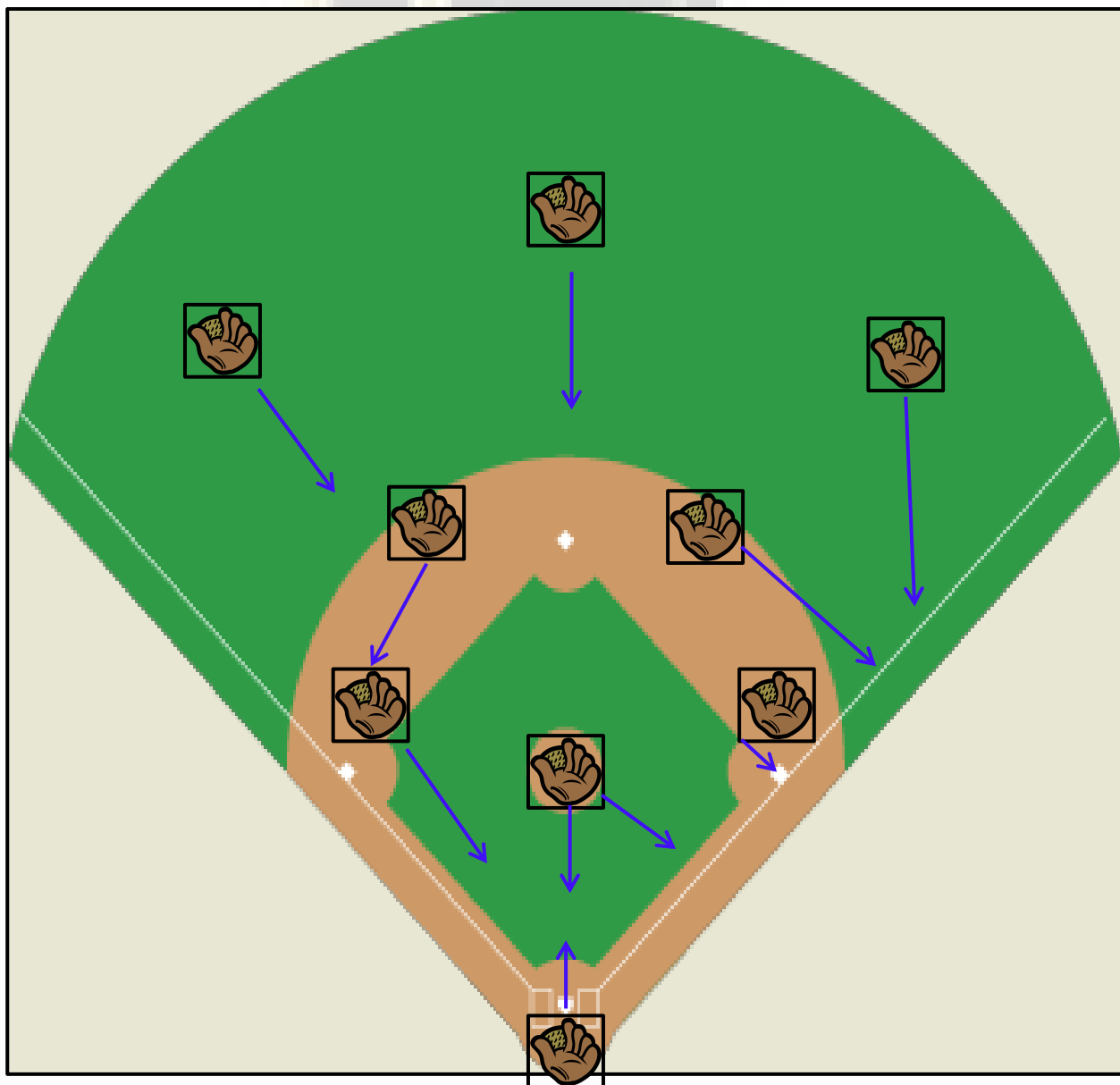
3B charges, SS covers second, 2B backs up 1B, 1B covers first base, C covers in front of home plate, and the pitcher is responsible for in front of the mound and the first base side.



Bunt Defense

3 of 7 – Runner on second base or runners on first and second base.

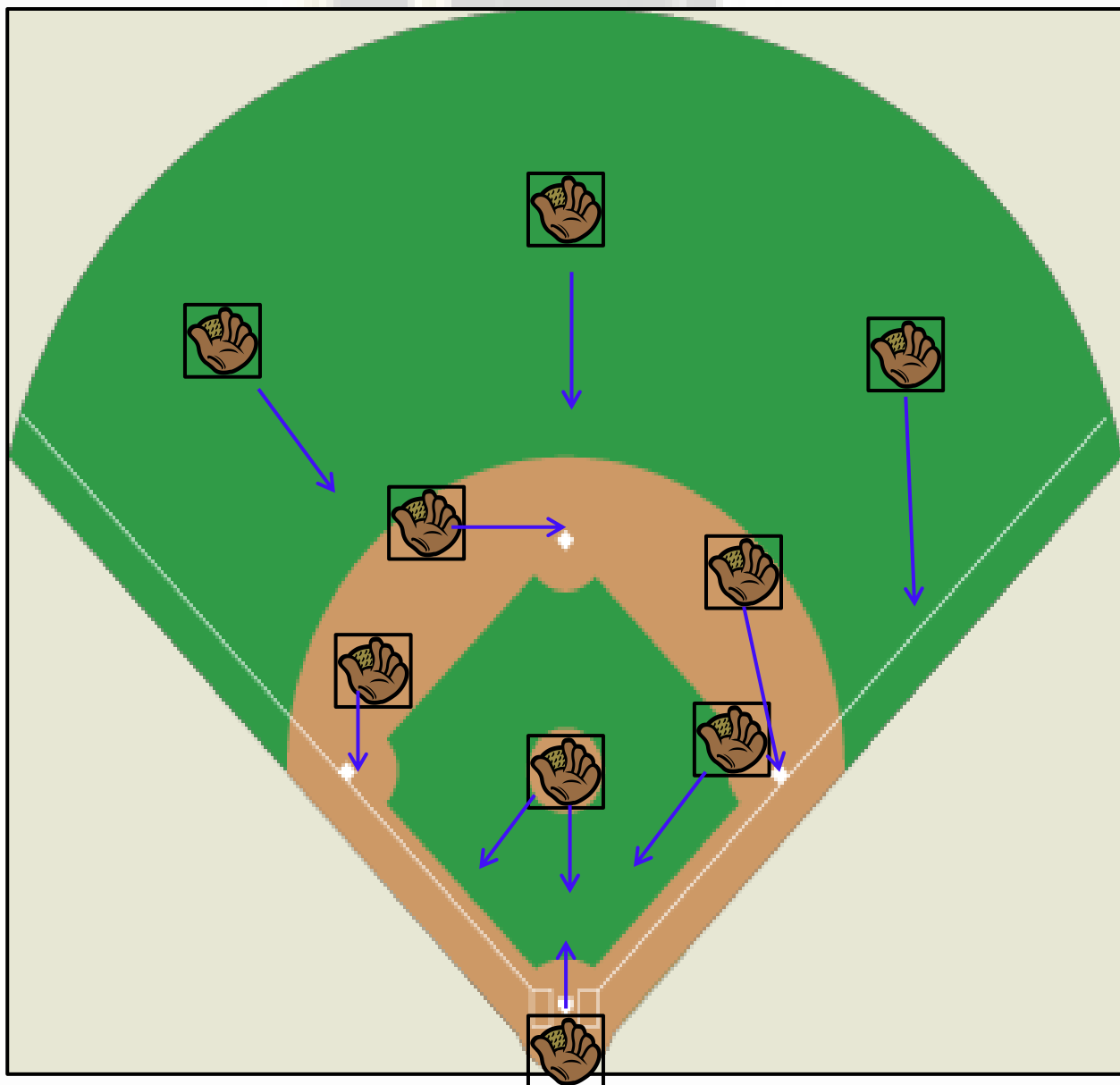
3B charges, SS covers third, 2B backs up 1B, 1B covers first base, C covers in front of home plate, and the pitcher is responsible for in front of the mound and the first base side.



Bunt Defense

4 of 7 – Runner on second base, or runners on first and second base

3B stays home and covers third base, SS covers second base, 2B covers first base, 1B charges, C covers in front of home plate, and the pitcher is responsible for in front of the mound and the first base side.

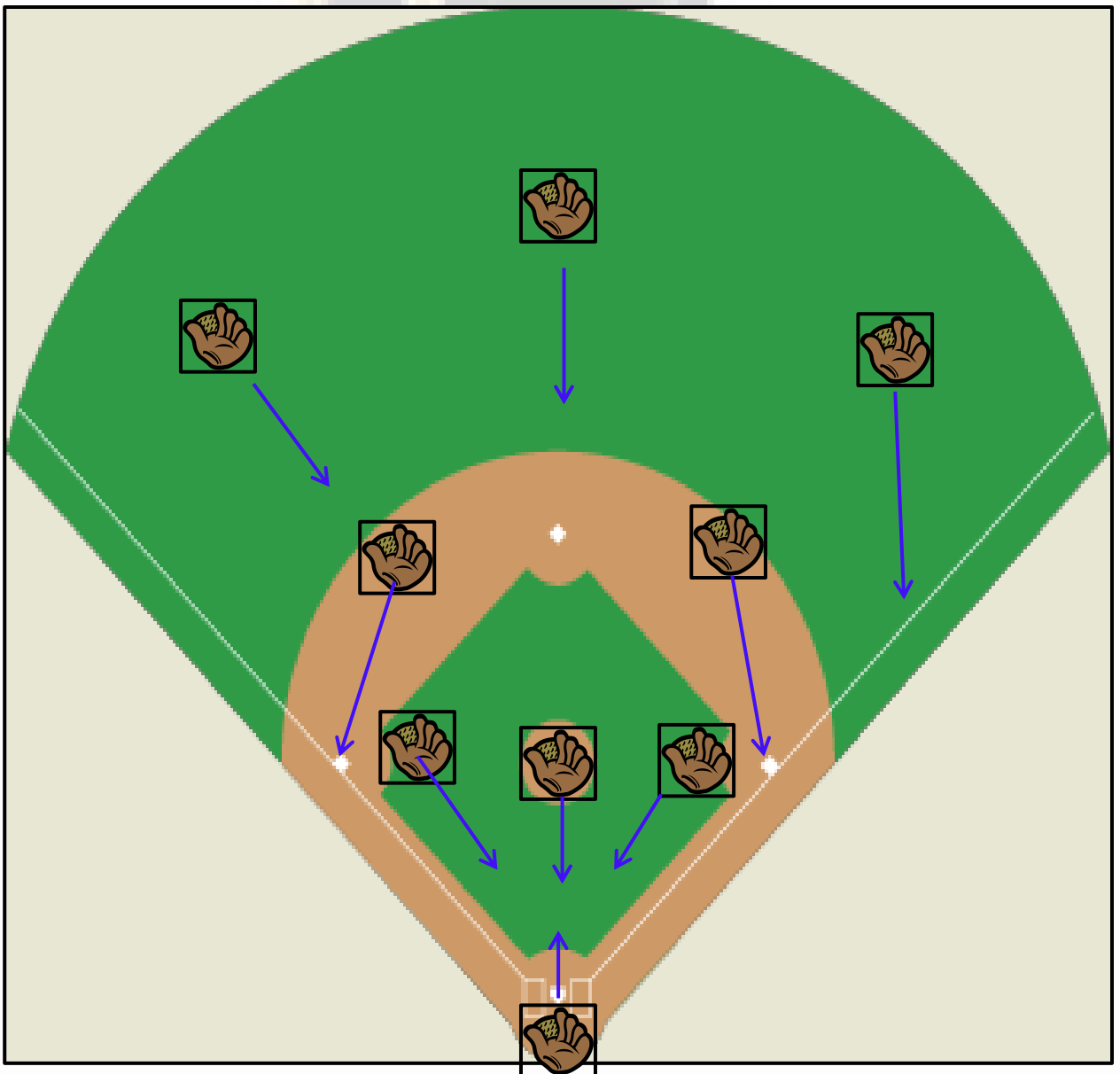


Bunt Defense

5 of 7 – Runner on second base or first and second base

****Wheel Play****

3B charges, SS covers third base, 2B covers first base, 1B charges, C covers in front of home plate, and the pitcher is responsible for in front of the mound. The goal here is to have an attempt at getting the runner out that is moving to third base. If that is not an option, then the defense must get the out at first base.

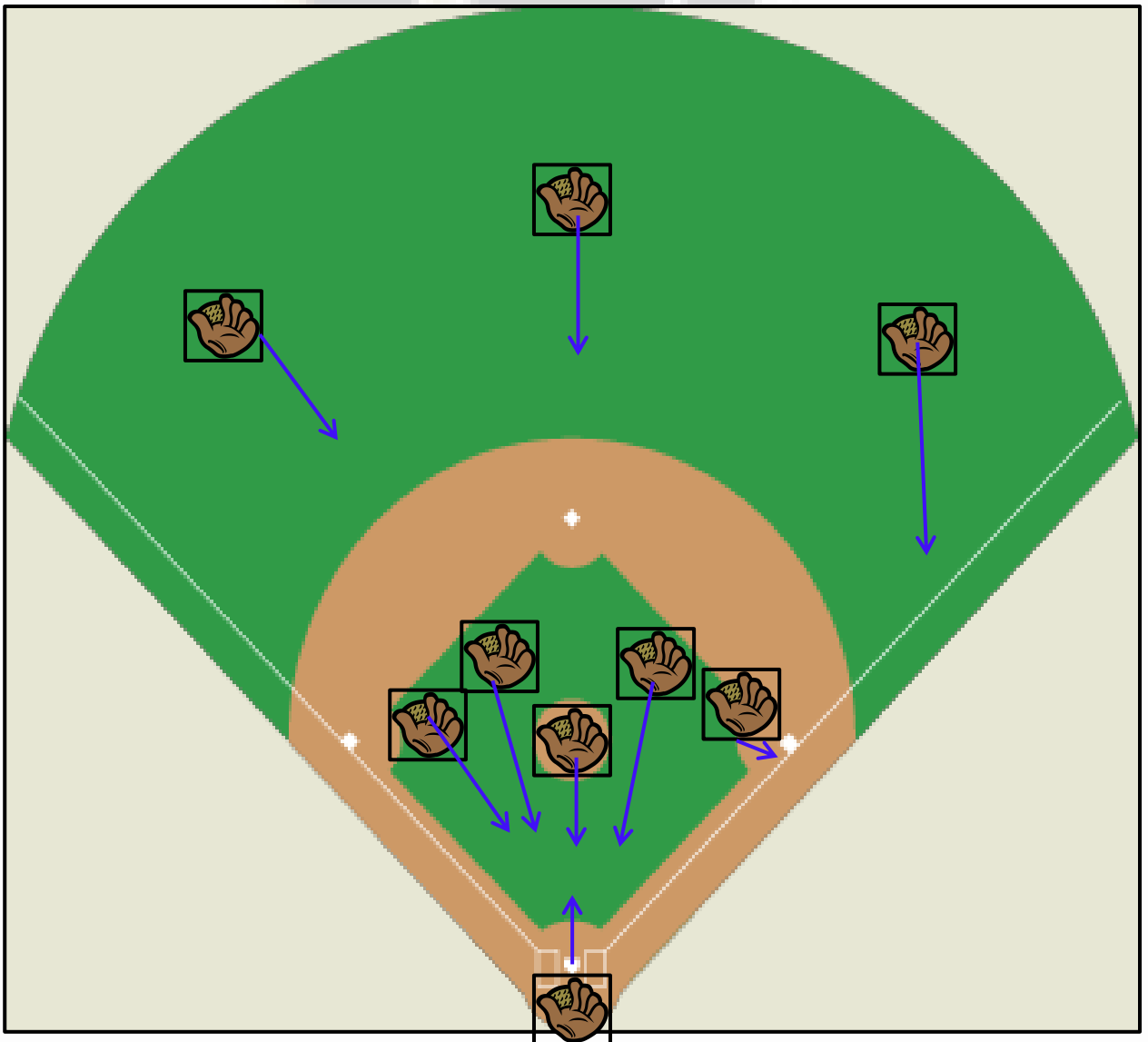


Bunt Defense

6 of 7 – Bases Load, Runners on second and third, or just third base

Suicide Squeeze Bunt Defense

The following bunt defense should be called only when the team is in a situation they expect a suicide squeeze to be put on by the opposing team. 3B charges, SS charges, 2B charges, 1B stays at first base, C covers in front of home plate, and the pitcher is responsible for in front of the mound. The goal here is to have an attempt at getting the runner out that is attempting to score. If that is not an option, then the defense must get the out at first base.

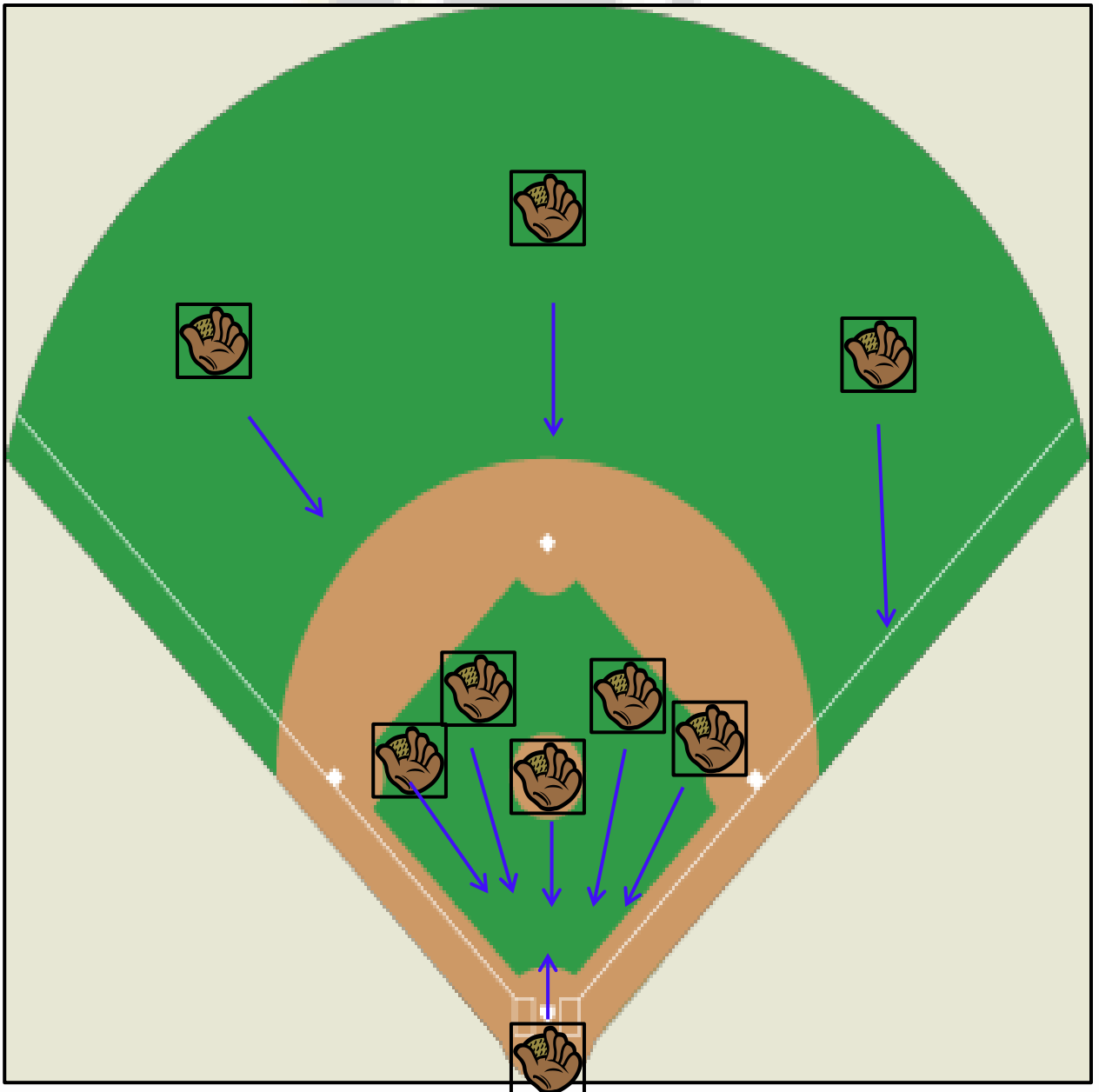


Bunt Defense

7 of 7 – Bases Load, Runners on second and third, or just third base

Walk-off Suicide Squeeze Bunt Defense

The following bunt defense should be called only when the team is in a situation they expect a suicide squeeze to be put on by the opposing team to end the game in a walk-off. The play here is to home. All infielders are charging. The goal here is to get the out at home to continue the game.





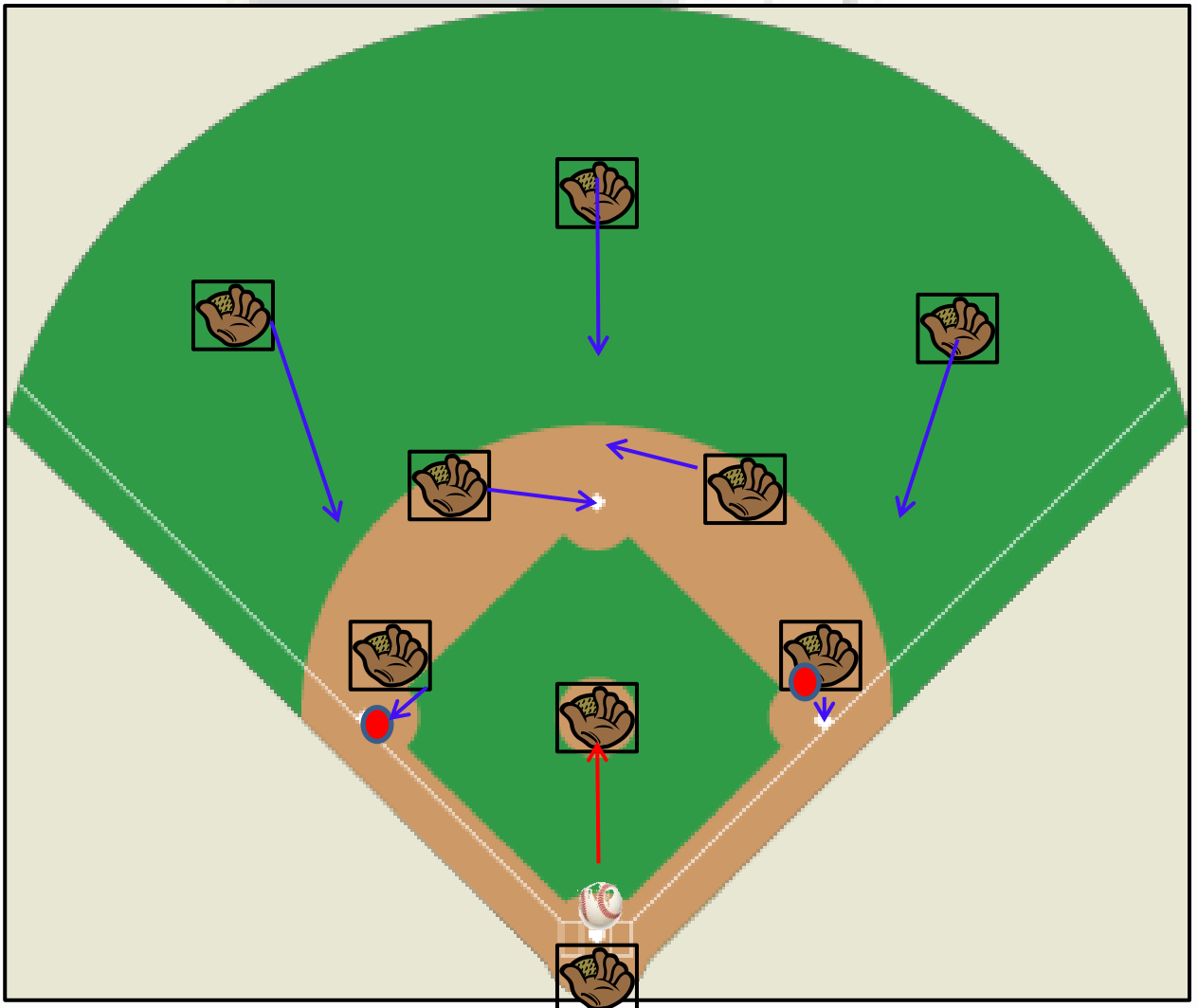
1st and 3rd plays

1st and 3rd plays

At the 14U+ level, there are numerous 1st and 3rd plays you can utilize. With that being said, we are only rolling out six of the basic plays

1 of 6

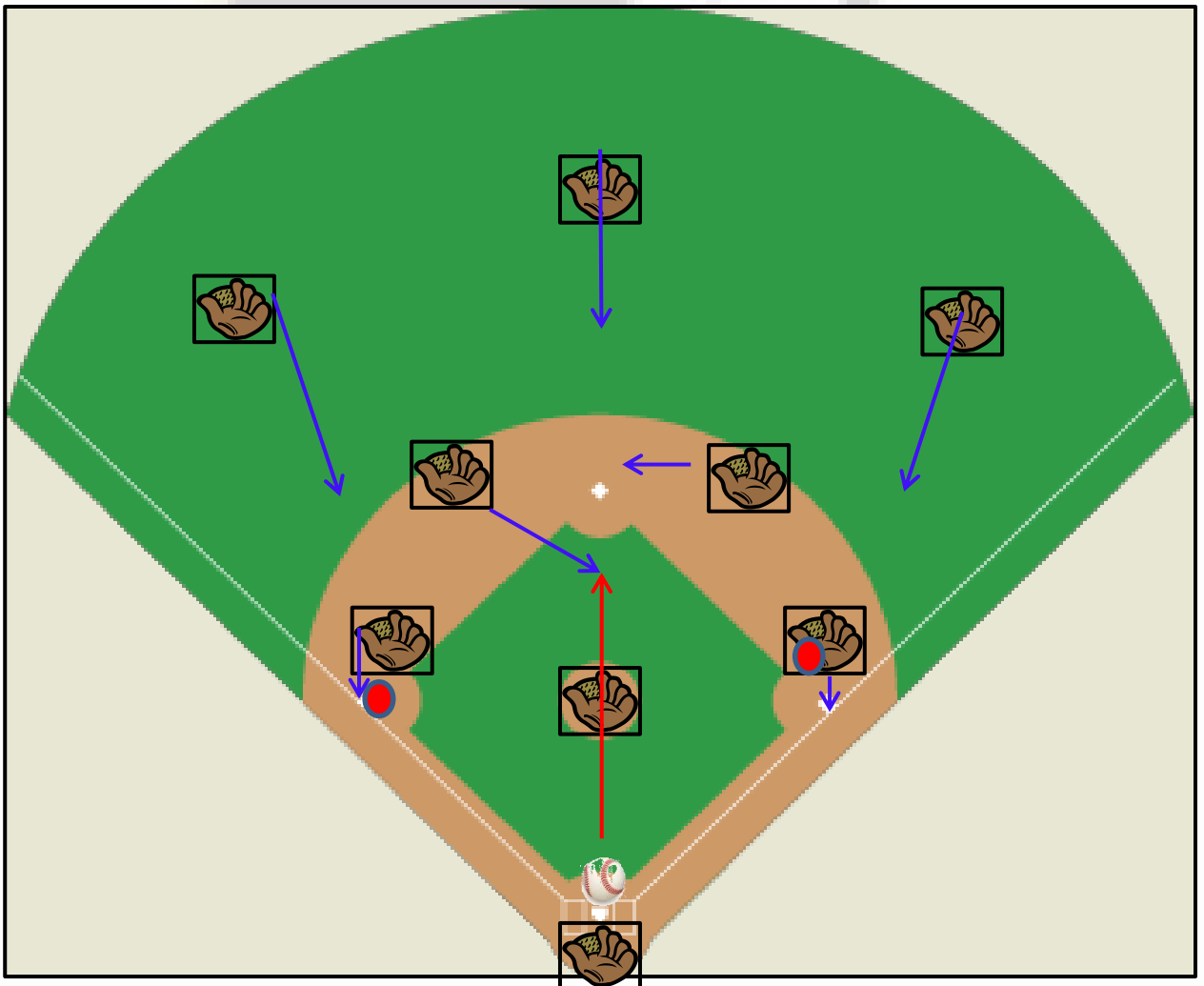
1B stays at first, SS covers second, 2B backs up second base, 3B covers 3B, the C delivers a hard throw to the pitch about head height. The goal here is to get the runner on third either leaning, too far extended, or on his way to home where we can make a play on that runner.



1st and 3rd plays

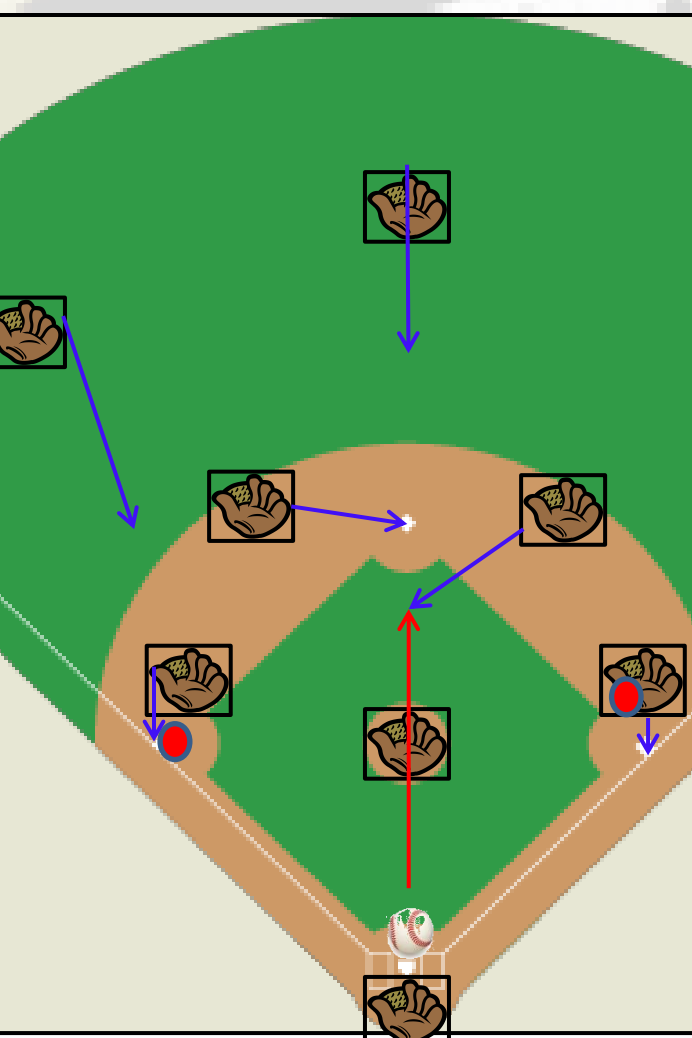
2 of 6

1B stays at first, 2B covers second base, 3B covers 3B, the C delivers a hard throw to the SS behind the pitcher's mound. The goal here is to get the runner on third either leaning, too far extended, or on his way to home where we can make a play on that runner. Also, be sure to check the runner on first going to second.



st, SS covers second base, 3B covers 3B, the 1B behind the pitcher's mound. The goal here is not to be either leaning, too far extended, or on his back. He should make a play on that runner. Also, be sure to be ready to go to second.

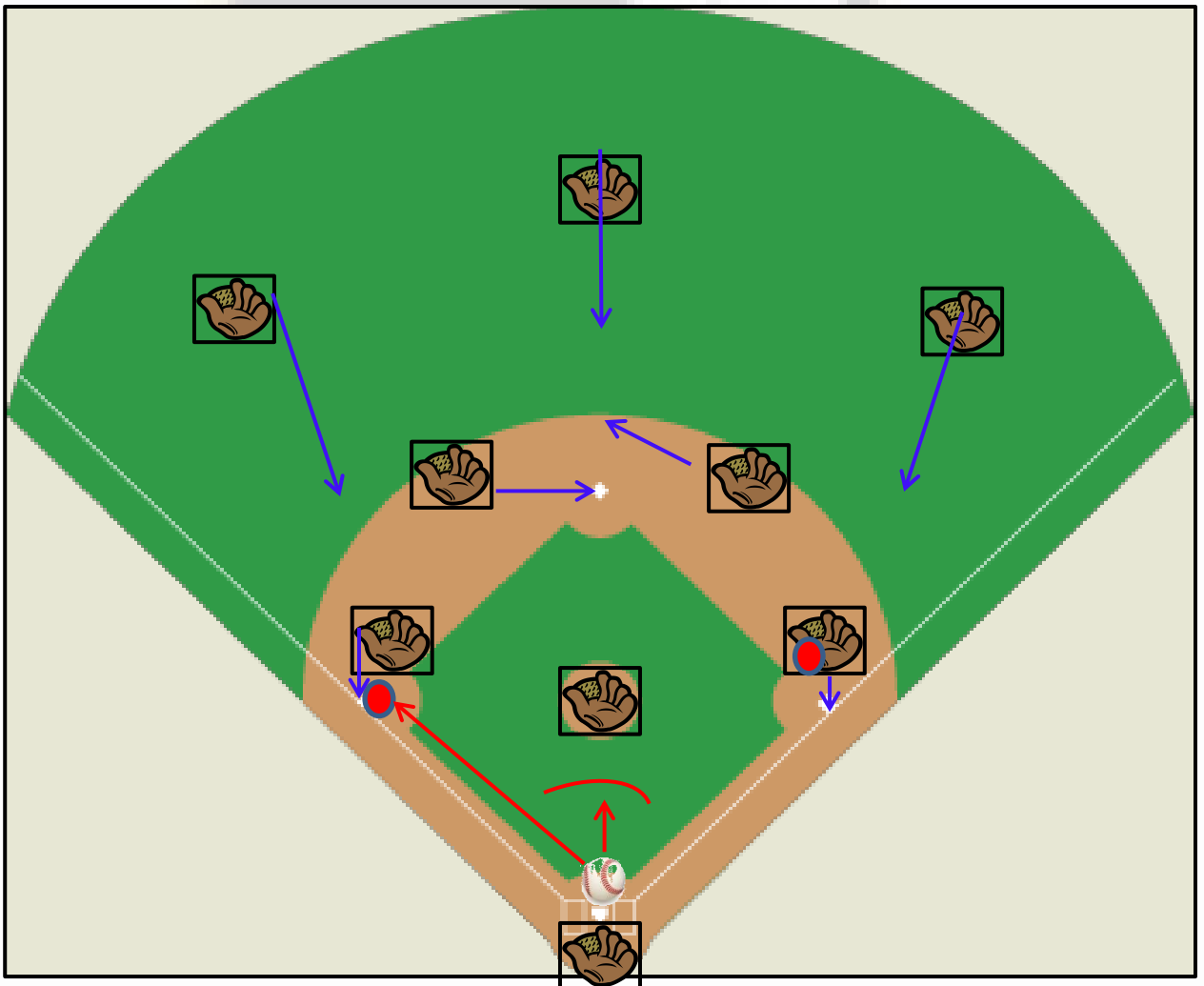
1B stays at first, SS covers second base, 3B covers 3B, the C delivers a hard throw to the 2B behind the pitcher's mound. The goal here is to get the runner on third either leaning, too far extended, or on his way to home where we can make a play on that runner. Also, be sure to check the runner on first going to second.



1st and 3rd plays

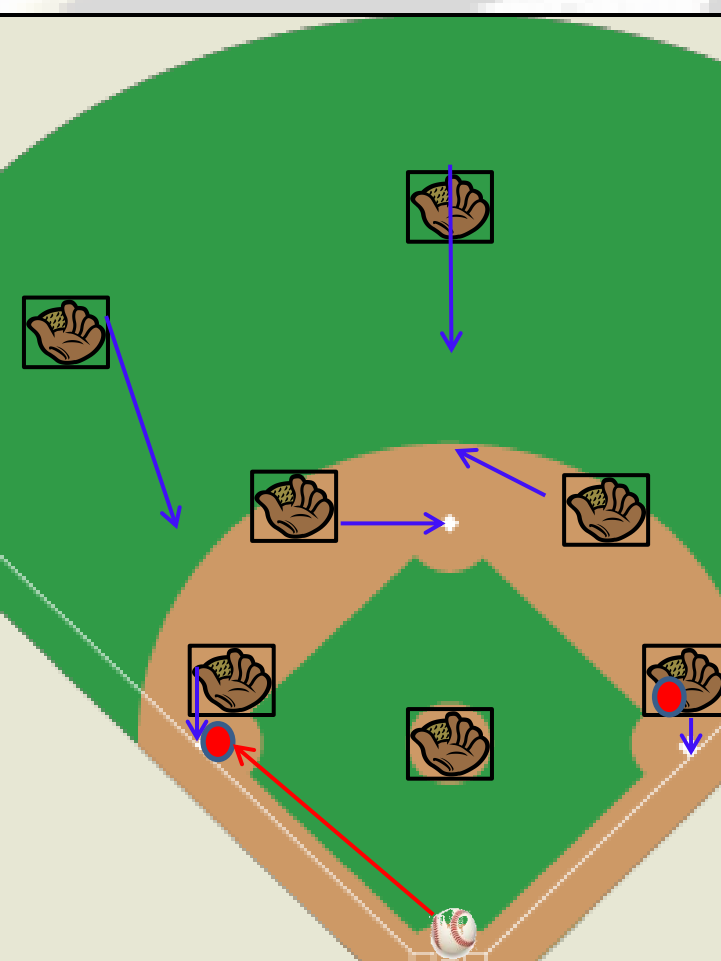
4 of 6

1B stays at first, SS covers second base, 2B backs up SS, 3B covers 3B, the C executes a fake throw to second and comes up firing the ball to third. The goal here is to get the runner on third either leaning, too far extended, or on his way to home where we can make a play on that runner.



first, SS covers second base, 2B backs up SS
a quick snap throw firing the ball to third. T
ner on third either leaning, too far extended,
e we can make a play on that runner.

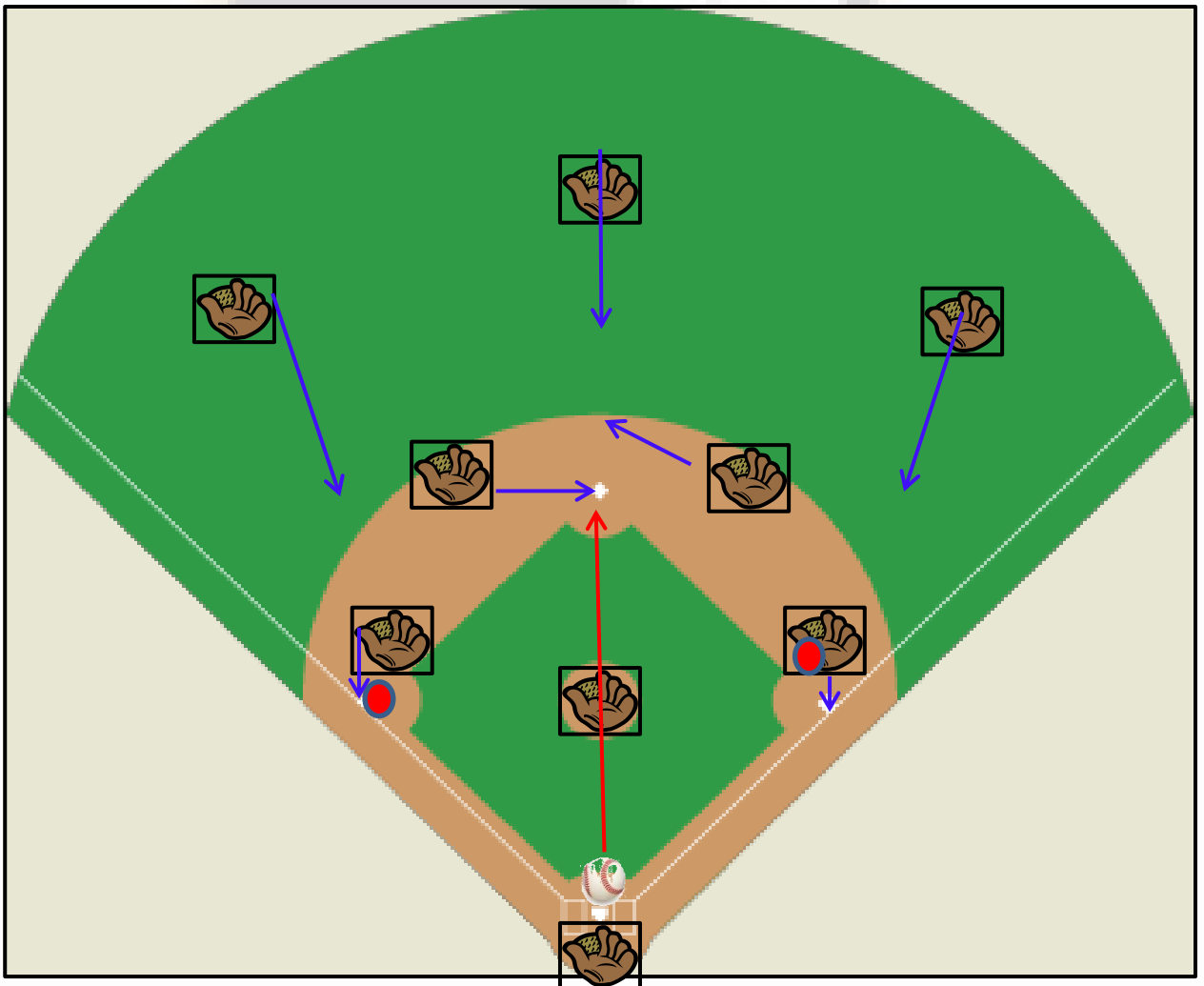
1B stays at first, SS covers second base, 2B backs up SS, 3B covers 3B, the C executes a quick snap throw firing the ball to third. The goal here is to get the runner on third either leaning, too far extended, or on his way to home where we can make a play on that runner.



1st and 3rd plays

6 of 6

1B stays at first, SS covers second base, 2B backs up SS, 3B covers 3B, the C executes a throw all the way down to second base in attempts to get the runner stealing second. This play will typically be used when there are two outs in an inning.



Offensive Plays

The following pages will dive into some detail of the offensive plays that should be taught as a baseline at the 14U+ level here in Andover.

There are a number of different strategies and theories out there, but we strive to have a fixed baseline throughout our program. This is not to limit you in any way, and feel free to explore other areas. However, it should be taught at a minimum to our teams.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact the coach & player development director or the travel director at any time.

Jason Saulsbury

Head Baseball Coach – Anoka Ramsey Community College



Bunting

Here in Andover, we recognize the importance of bunting. It is an offensive weapon that will put you in the path of success. We will encourage it and embrace it, especially in those game situations that call for it. At the high school level, I would estimate if there is a runner on first or second with no outs in a tight game, there is at least a 70%-80% chance the batter will be bunting to advance the runner.

Here are the different situations we look to execute a bunt:

- ❖ Bunting to move runners over (Safety Squeeze)
- ❖ Bunting for a base hit.
- ❖ Bunting to score a runner on third (Suicide Squeeze)


I will briefly discuss the form/mechanics we encourage players to use here in Andover, along with each situation.

Bunting

Mechanics/Form

We want all of our players to utilize the pivot bunt. The only time they may alter this, is when bunting for a base hit.

Here are the rules and characteristics of a good pivot bunt technique:

- ❖ Stance has the **feet shoulder width apart** (slightly more is fine) and remain square to the plate, not the pitcher.
- 
- ❖ Stand closer to the pitcher than normal (**up in the box**). This will allow a better opportunity to bunt the ball in fair territory.
 - ❖ Stand closer to home plate than normal. This will allow more **plate coverage** with the barrel of the bat once the actual pivot is made. Most poor bunt attempts are made due to a lack of plate coverage. Put your players in position to successfully bunt the strike on the outside half of the plate.
 - ❖ When the pitcher takes the ball from the glove during delivery, pivot on the both feet without picking them up from the ground. The back heel should be up and the front heel down with **50/50 balance**. (When bunting for a hit or squeezing this happens later in the pitcher's delivery.)
 - ❖ **Shoulders** should be square to the pitcher.
 - ❖ Torso bent slightly forward.
 - ❖ **Knees flexed**.
- ❖ Arms relaxed and **extended forward**.
 - ❖ Slide top hand up the taper of the bat. Top hand should use the thumb, index and middle fingers to control the bat. These fingers should **pinch** the bat in the shape of the letter "V".
 - ❖ There should be a **minimum of 8 inches** between hands. The top hand is the fulcrum. More distance between the fulcrum and the bottom hand will give the player more bat control.
 - ❖ Bat should be held in front of the plate with the **barrel angled slightly higher** than the handle.
 - ❖ To hit the lower pitch, **lower the body**, not the hands. The rule is.... **"Keep the bat head above the ball."** State it positively, that gives a notion of "what to do", not "what not to do".

Bunting

(Cont.)

Safety Squeeze (Sacrifice Bunt)

- ❖ The batter should always perform a pivot bunt.
- ❖ They should never pivot too early, or too late. As mentioned before, a good rule of thumb is when the pitcher's hands break (meaning when the pitcher starts to remove the ball from their glove during their delivery to home plate), the pivot should be made.
- ❖ The player should try to bunt the ball toward the third base side or the first base side, depending on the situation. This is completed by simply swiveling the bat with the bottom hand.
- ❖ To reach a ball up in the strike zone, or down in the strike zone, the batter should use their legs to move up and down. They should never reach with the bat when the ball is up in the strike zone or drop the barrel of the bat when the ball is down in the strike zone.
- ❖ Remember the goal here is to advance runners. If the batter ends up getting on base while advancing the runner(s), that is just a bonus.

Base Hit (Push or Drag Bunt)

- ❖ The batter will delay to bunt until the last possible second. A good rule of thumb is when the pitcher's arm starts moving forward toward home plate.
- ❖ The batter will not perform the perfect pivot bunt mechanics, but will more so rotate and bring the bat into the zone while moving in the box.
- ❖ The bat should be angled towards the first or third base sides.
- ❖ The batter needs to make sure both of their feet remain in the batter's box until the ball is bunted.

Bunting

(Cont.)

Bunting to score a runner from third base (Suicide Squeeze)

- ❖ The batter should always perform a pivot bunt, but he will make the pivot as late as possible. A good rule of thumb is as the pitcher's arm is moving towards home plate.
- ❖ The batter MUST make contact with the ball no matter what.
- ❖ The runner is breaking for home plate as soon as he knows the pitcher is delivering the baseball to home plate.
- ❖ We are not necessarily worried about what side of the infield the ball goes to, just that the batter gets the bat on the ball, so the runner can score.
- ❖ A key here is the element of surprise. Use this in late game situations, or even at times during the game our opponents will not expect it.

Fake Bunting

- ❖ This is also a great offensive weapon that can be used any time during a game.
- ❖ Execute exactly like a sacrifice bunt; do not pivot too early or too late. As mentioned a couple times before, a good rule of thumb is when the pitcher's hands break (meaning when the pitcher starts to remove the ball from their glove during their delivery to home plate), the pivot should be made.
- ❖ As the baseball approaches home plate, the batter should pull the bat back.
- ❖ This can be used to protect runners when stealing.
- ❖ This can also be used when you see an opposing pitcher struggling or to get them off their game; it will throw their focus off.
- ❖ It can also be used so a coach can read what bunt defense the opposing team has in place.

Fake Bunt/Slash

- ❖ You will want to pivot a bit earlier than a fake bunt. A good rule of thumb is when the pitcher just starts his motion to home plate before the break of his hands.
- ❖ As the ball leaves the pitcher's hand the batter should pull the bat back.
- ❖ The batter will then be slightly choked up on the bat and is ready to swing away – The batter does not have to swing at every pitch, only at strikes.
- ❖ Ideally performed when runners are on base.
- ❖ It will surprise your defense as the bunt defenders will be charging, thus opening up additional holes in the infield. The batter should look to stay on top of the ball, hitting a line drive or driving the ball into the ground.



Stealing

Stealing

Here in Andover, we also recognize the important role stealing bases plays in the game. We encourage teams to be aggressive on the bases and to steal as often as you can. The benefit of putting runners at motion will kick start your offense and put an extreme amount of pressure on your opponent, thus causing them to make mistakes.

Some of the items you will want to work with your players on when it comes to stealing bases include:

- ❖ **Crossover Step** - The first move towards second should be a crossover step. Often a base runner will move their right foot first, picking it up and moving it an inch or two. All this does is take time and gets you no closer to second base. Whether stealing a base or playing defense, picking up and putting your lead foot back down will cost you time. It's a bad habit and one you need to break.
- ❖ **Stay Low And User Your Arms** - Want to be more explosive towards second? Start with your arms. As you pick up your left foot to start your crossover, also use your arms to get your movement toward second started. Take your left hand and throw a punch toward second base. This will get your upper body twisted quickly toward second base and get you moving quickly. Stay low as you start, standing straight up will only slow you down.
- ❖ **Take A Glance** - If you are stealing on your own or a run and hit has been called, you will need to take a glance toward home plate when you anticipate the ball will be crossing the plate. The reason is to pick up the ball as it crosses the plate. If the hitter hits a pop fly, you need to see it and quickly stop. You may find you want to do this on every steal. The batter may have missed the sign and is swinging when you expect him to be taking. The glance can also help you decide on how you are going to go into second base.
- ❖ **Slide** - The main thing to realize is that the quickest way to second base is a strait line and slide that is strait into the bag. Many players learn to hook slide in addition to a strait slide, in reality the only reason to use a hook slide is to avoid being tagged when you are sure to be out if you slide straight in. If you are sure you're going to be tagged out, you may find a strait slide to the back side of second base is your best chance to get in safe. This works best when the infielder covering the bag is not straddling the bag but is to the inside.

Stealing

(Cont.)

Other things to take into consideration when putting your runners in motion include:

- ❖ How fast is your runner(s) on base
- ❖ How quick is the pitcher to home plate
- ❖ What is the catcher's time to second base

There are situations throughout each game that allows a coach to consider stealing their runners on base. Some key counts include:

- ❖ 3 balls and 2 strikes
- ❖ 2 balls and 1 strike
- ❖ 3 balls and 1 strike
- ❖ 2 balls and 0 strikes

Stealing

(Cont.)

There are other stealing plays you should utilize during the course of a game/season. Those include:

- ❖ **Delayed Steal** – A delayed steal is performed when there is a runner on first base and third base. The runner on first base does not make his break until the catcher is delivering the ball back to the pitcher after the pitch. The runner on third will need to read exactly what the fielders are doing when deciding to break for home plate. The runner that was on first base must keep their head on a swivel and at the very least should get in a run-down to protect the runner on third attempting to advance to home. Best case scenario with this play we score a run and advance the runner on first base to second base. The worse case scenario should be ending up two runners in scoring position.
- ❖ **Early Steal** – This is kind of in the same lines as the delayed steal with the exception that the runner on first base will make his break when the pitcher is just taking the mound to get his signs from the catcher. The exact same things applies after the runner makes his break, as is covered in the delayed steal. The runner on third will need to read exactly what the fielders are doing when deciding to break for home plate. The runner that was on first base must keep their head on a swivel and at the very least should get in a run-down to protect the runner on third attempting to advance to home. Best case scenario with this play we score a run and advance the runner on first base to second base. The worse case scenario should be ending up two runners in scoring position.
- ❖ **Run through 1st On A Walk** – This is also a great weapon. However, there must be a few criteria in place to execute this play. First, there should be a runner on third base with less than two outs. The count should be 3-0 or 3-1 on the batter in order to give this sign. Once the sign is in, assuming the next pitch is ball four, the runner will start on his way down to first base and continue running to second base. From there everything is the same as mentioned in the previous two plays. The runner on third will need to read exactly what the fielders are doing when deciding to break for home plate. The runner that walked and is running through first base must keep their head on a swivel and at the very least should get in a run-down to protect the runner on third attempting to advance to home. Best case scenario with this play we score a run and advance the runner on first base to second base. The worse case scenario should be ending up two runners in scoring position. Practice all three of these plays, as they are great offensive weapons.



Hit and Run

Hit and Run

Executing a hit and run play is one of the coolest plays in baseball. However, there are specific times during a game when to pull off a hit and run. First, you must have the correct criteria in place.

- ❖ Runner on first base or runners on first and second base
- ❖ Less than two outs
- ❖ Consideration of the count on the batter

When calling the hit and run, the ideal count on the batter is 2 balls and 1 strike.

Here are some of the responsibilities of the batter, when a hit an run is called:

- ❖ Don't chase a pitch in the dirt: The general rule on a hit and run is to swing no matter what. Whether it's way outside, over your head, or the nastiest curveball you've ever seen, you need to swing and get the bat on the ball to protect the runner. However, you can exercise a bit of discretion. If the pitch is so low that it's clearly going to bounce in front of the plate, you can lay off that pitch. A pitch in the dirt is almost impossible to hit, and it's even less likely that a catcher will be able to block the ball, pick it up, and throw to second in time to nail the runner.
- ❖ Get on top of the baseball: As mentioned above, your primary focus is to hit the ball on the ground. A fly ball might keep you out of the double play, but the runner will have to go back to first and the play will be wasted. A ground ball means, at the very least, you will advance the runner. When you swing, focus on keeping your hands straight to the ball and getting the bat on top of it.
- ❖ Hit behind the runner: This is where bat control comes into play. In most cases (and particularly with a right-handed hitter up), the second baseman will take the throw at second base on a steal. As a result, when the runner takes off on a hit and run, the second baseman will have to leave his position to cover the bag. This leaves a big hole open at second base, which is the ideal place to hit the ball. If you hit a grounder to the shortstop, for example, the runner will have to stop at second and you will probably be out at first. But if you can shoot the ball into a vacated hole, you might just get a base hit.

Hit and Run

(Cont.)

Here are some of the responsibilities of the runner, when a hit an run is called:

- ❖ Make sure the pitcher goes home: If there's a good situation for a hit and run, the opponent will know it, too. Be aware that the pitcher might try to pick you off. You're not trying to steal the bag straight up, so an outstanding jump doesn't matter all that much. It's okay to wait an extra instant to make sure the pitcher throws home before you go.
- ❖ Take a peek: After two or three strides, turn your head towards the plate and take a peek to see what happened. Did the batter hit the ball in front of you or behind you? Did he hit it on the ground or in the air? Worst of all, did the batter swing and miss or take the pitch? Depending on the outcome of the pitch, you may need to try for third base, slide into second, or stop and get back to first. Keep your ears open and listen to your coaches, but also try to catch a glimpse of the action.
- ❖ Pick up your third base coach: If the play is executed correctly and the batter hits it on the ground, you may or may not be able to see the ball (especially if it goes to right field). As soon as you hear the bat make contact, look up and find your coach. He can see the play, so he'll make the decision whether to stop you at second base or bring you around to third.



Signal Calling By The Coach

Signal Calling By The Coach

Remember these are 14 year old players and not professional ballplayers. Although, you can start having a more complex calling system, do not over complicate it. The less complex the signal calling from the coach, the better chance you have of your players executing the called play.

- ❖ Calling Pitches – Obviously at the 14U+ level, you should be getting in-depth with different pitch types and locations. Unfortunately, I have witnessed coaches calling every pitch at this level. That is not needed. I encourage our coaches to develop their catchers and pitchers to manage the game. There are critical times in a game, where you may want a breaking ball called, or something along those line. That is completely understandable. However, avoid getting into a situation where you are calling every pitch. Use those opportunities where the catcher did not call the “right” pitch in a certain situation as a “teachable moment”.
- ❖ Bunt Defenses – This is something a coach can simply call out to his defense during an inning. The easiest thing I have found that players relate to is assigning color codes to each bunt defense you are running (i.e. black = bunt defense #1, gold = bunt defense #2). Make sure you set your standard bunt defense with your team prior to the beginning of the season. For example, the “black” bunt defense is your normal bunt defense your players are always in, unless you switch it during an inning to the “gold” bunt defense.
- ❖ 1st and 3rd Plays – At the 14U+ level, a coach should be signaling in the play to their catcher, where then the catcher will signal it into the field. This is completed by the coach signaling the play into the catcher. The catcher will then call time from the umpire, step out front of home plate, and signal in the play to the rest of the defense. You can define for your catcher to have an indicator, or just define a hot sign. For example, lets say you defined a hot sign for your 1st and 3rd plays. The coach will signal to the catcher which play to run. Also, let’s say the sign between the coach and the catcher is the touching of their ear. If the coach touches his ear once then play # 1 is on; if he touches his ear twice then play # 2 is on; so on and so forth. Once the sign as been received by the catcher he will step out in front of home plate and deliver the play sign to the rest of the defense. One way the coach can have the catcher signal the called play will be by flashing five signs to the fielders. The third sign will be the “hot” sign indicating what play is on. The catcher will then relay five signs to the defense, where the third sign will tell them what play is on.

Here is an example of some of the catcher’s signals to the defense:

- ❖ Catcher touching top of helmet = Play # 1
- ❖ Catcher touching front of face mask = Play # 2
- ❖ Catcher touching chest = Play # 3
- ❖ Catcher touching belt = Play # 4

Signal Calling By The Coach

Offensively, when signaling in plays, whether it is to take a pitch, bunt, steal, hit and run, etc. it is important that you as a coach prepare your team with the signs. Discussing them for the first time before the first game is NOT a recipe for success. I encourage all of our coaches here in Andover to develop their own sign calling system. However, they should all include these characteristics:

- ❖ An Indicator – This sign tells the player that a play is going to be coming right after.
- ❖ The play – The play the coach is calling should follow directly after the indicator.
- ❖ Wipe off – This should be implemented, so if a coach gives an indicator and the play sign, they can wipe off the play so there is nothing on, or at least as a reset.
- ❖ Take Sign – No indicator is necessarily needed, but develop a sign for when you want your batter to take a pitch.

For example, let's say you want to put on a steal. Your indicator is your left elbow and your steal sign is the brim of your hat and the wipe off is across the chest. The coach should give one or two false signals followed by touching their left elbow and then the brim of their hat, followed by one or two false signs – the steal is on. If the coach then wants to take the play off, all he has to do is wipe across their chest.

Obviously, I leave it to you, the coach, to determine exactly what your signals are.

It is highly encouraged for you to define your signaling system at the beginning of the season and even document it, where you can distribute it to your players to study and you can implement it into your practice plan.



Final Thoughts

Final Thoughts

Thank you for taking the time to review this “playbook”. It has been developed as a guide for you; using years of playing, coaching, and witnessing exactly what happens on the diamond in our youth organization. Again, I could not emphasize more, this is **not** a guide to limit you as a coach to what information you are delivering to our players. But, as I mentioned in my opening statement, it serves as the baseline of what we need you to teach to our young players.

Make no mistake about it, you can be a first-year coach, or a grizzled veteran; we need all to partake in this path. The ability for us as a baseball community and as an organization to continue to move forward needs a baseline education of all of our players. It is up to you, as a coach, to deliver at a minimum the contents of this “playbook”.

This has not been developed as an “In-House” tool, or a “Travel” tool, but as something that can relate to both.

There is a complete support structure in place if you should have any questions. Please, if you do have any questions, contact the travel director or the coach & player development director at any time.

Thank you for coaching this year! **YOU ARE THE BACKBONE OF ANDOVER BASEBALL!** Take pride in that. As an organization, we are only as strong as the coaches and players we have.

Sincerely and Best Regards,

Jason Saulsbury

Head Baseball Coach – Anoka Ramsey Community College

References

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Written By Jason Saulsbury

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Acknowledgement

Minimum Coaching Requirements

14U+

Andover Baseball Association

I, _____, hereby agree that I have reviewed the “Coaching Playbook” for my age group and fully anticipate to deliver its contents to my team during the upcoming season. I understand the importance of implementing the baseline knowledge our players require. I will utilize all support structures in place to better myself as a coach, as well as the team I lead.

Signed: _____

Date: _____



Certified Andover Baseball Association Coach

Be it known to all that

Has fulfilled the coaching requirements of the Andover Baseball Association by completing the review of this “playbook” and the promise to deliver its contents to their team at the 14U+ level.

Our organization is proud to recognize the achievement of this individual. The completion of reviewing these standards of our organization contributes to better our program in our community and the well-being of our athletes through better coaching.

Jamie Husom

Jamie Husom

Coach & Player Development Director – Andover Baseball Association

John Stevens

John Stevens

Travel Director – Andover Baseball Association