

In baseball, the fair and foul poles are actually the same physical structures - they're just called different things depending on the context of how you're thinking about them.

The poles themselves:

Located at the foul lines where they extend from first base and third base into the outfield

Positioned at the edge of fair territory along the foul lines

Typically yellow or orange colored for visibility

Extend upward from the outfield fence

Why the naming seems confusing:

They're called "foul poles" because they mark the boundary between fair and foul territory

But when a ball hits them, it's actually a **fair ball** and counts as a home run

The key rule: Any batted ball that hits the foul pole is considered fair and is a home run. The poles are positioned directly on the foul line, and in baseball, anything on the foul line is considered fair territory.

So while we call them "foul poles," they're really "fair poles" in terms of what happens when a ball hits them. It's one of those quirky baseball naming conventions that can trip people up. The poles essentially serve as vertical extensions of the foul lines to help umpires determine whether high fly balls down the lines are fair or foul - if it hits the pole or passes on the fair side of it, it's fair.