

National Federation of State
High School Associations




2013 NFHS Baseball Rules Changes

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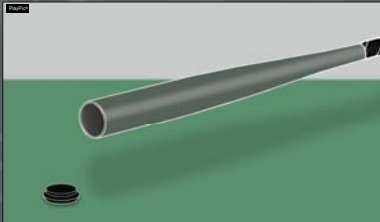


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Altering of Bats
Rule 1-3-2 Note



RULE CHANGE




The altering of non-wood bats continues to be an important issue in high school baseball. It is the responsibility of players and coaches to ensure that bats are not altered.


REFEREE

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Altering of Bats
Rules 1-3-2 Note



RULE CHANGE



The NFHS has been advised that certain manufacturers consider alteration, modification and "doctoring" of their bats to be unlawful and subject to civil and, under certain circumstances, criminal action.

REFEREE

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Legal Consequences Rule 1-3-2 Note

- The NFHS is aware that bat altering is on the rise.
- Bat manufacturers are also aware and extremely concerned about their products being misrepresented and altered.
- It is extremely important that coaches express to their players and their parents the importance of not altering or modifying bats.



▪ **Rationale:** Risk Minimization.

Electronic Monitoring Equipment
Rule 3-3-1f

It is illegal to use any video monitoring or replay equipment for coaching purposes during a game. That includes mobile devices that have video capabilities.

RULE CHANGE

REFEREE

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Electronic Equipment
Rule 3-3-1f

A coach or team member may use electronic equipment in the dugout as long as it is not used for video recording or replay. A tablet computer used for scorekeeping purposes only is permissible.

RULE CHANGE

REFEREE

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Video Usage Rule 3-3-1f

- Smart phones and tablet computers effectively handle mundane tasks like keeping score, managing the line-up and tracking the progress and performance of both teams.
- Using these devices for video recording and replaying the images are not permitted.
- **PENALTY: Coach shall be ejected.**

▪ **Rationale:** Prohibited use of video monitoring.



Equipment in Coaching Box Rule 3-3-1i



A coach may not have any electronic equipment in the coaching box, even if intended to be used for scoring purposes only.



RULE CHANGE

REFEREE

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Electronic Equipment Rule 3-3-1i



The only equipment that a coach may have and use in the coaching box is a stopwatch, a rules book (hard copy) and a scorebook (hard copy).




RULE CHANGE

REFEREE

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Coach's Box Equipment Rule 3-3-1i

- Permissible Equipment:
 - Stopwatch
 - Hard copy of the NFHS Baseball Rules book
 - Hard copy of a scorebook
 - Cellular phone (in pocket) for emergencies.
- **PENALTY:** Umpire may restrict the offender to the bench/dugout for the remainder of the game or eject the offender.
- **Rationale:** Clarification of permitted items in the coach's box.





Extra Warmup Throws Rule 6-2-2c Exception

RULE CHANGE


When a pitcher is ejected from a game, his successor may be authorized to receive more than the standard eight warmup throws that he would get as a substitute.



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Extra Warmup Throws Rule 6-2-2c Exception

RULE CHANGE




When replacing a pitcher who was ejected, the substitute pitcher should be afforded the same warmup criteria as he would if replacing an injured pitcher. Extra throws may be authorized by the umpire-in-chief.


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**Extra Warm up Throws
Rule 6-2-2c Exception**


- If a pitcher is ejected, an incoming pitcher should be afforded the same warm up opportunity as he would if he was replacing an injured pitcher.
- The umpire-in-chief may grant more pitchers to warm up the new pitcher's arm.
- **Rationale:** Clarification of the treatment of an incoming pitcher.



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Editorial Changes




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**Dead Ball and Delayed Dead Ball
Table**


- Awards or Penalties #23. "Batter is out. Coach is restricted to the dugout/bench upon first offense, then ejected after second offense....7-4-a, 1-3-5, 4-1-3b Penalty.
- **Rationale:** Editorial.



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Points of Emphasis


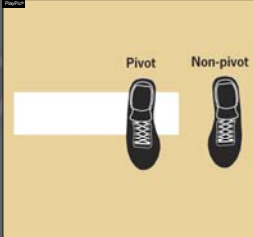


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NFHS

Legal Pitching Positions

POINT OF EMPHASIS

The windup is one of two legal pitching positions. For the windup, the pitcher's non-pivot foot shall be in any position on or behind a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate.



REFEREE

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NFHS

Legal Pitching Positions

POINT OF EMPHASIS

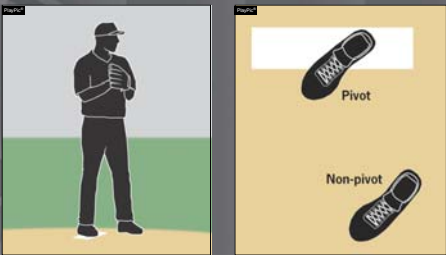
The set is the other legal pitching position. For the set position, a pitcher's entire non-pivot foot must be in front of a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate and the entire pivot foot must be in contact with or in front of the pitching plate.

REFEREE

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POINT OF EMPHASIS

Illegal Pitching Position




A number of pitchers are starting a pitch from this hybrid position. This position is illegal since it does not meet the criteria of either the windup or set position.

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POINT OF EMPHASIS

Illegal Pitching Motion



Going to the mouth while in contact with the pitcher's plate is an illegal pitch with no one on base or a balk with runners on base, not because the pitcher goes to his mouth, but because the action simulates the start of the pitching motion.

REFEREE

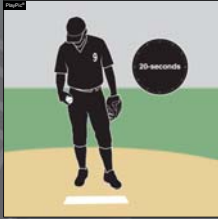
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Legal/Illegal Pitching Position

- Rules governing the pitcher's position on the pitcher's plate and movement have remained constant over the last several decades.
- Modified and hybrid positions have become popular at higher levels of baseball.
- These creative pitcher's stances might be appropriate at the advanced levels but not for the age and skill level of a typical high school pitcher.
- Umpires must be aware of the position of the non-pivot foot.

REFEREE

POINT OF EMPHASIS



Pace of Play

A pitcher has 20 seconds to pitch or make or attempt a play (including a legal feint) after receiving the ball. By enforcing this and other pace of play rules, the game will be played at the proper speed without either team gaining an unfair advantage.

REFEREE

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POINT OF EMPHASIS




Pace of Play

A returning pitcher has 60 seconds to complete his five warmup throws (timed from the third out of the previous inning). Teams should hustle on and off the field once the third out is made.

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POINT OF EMPHASIS



Pace of Play


The batter must remain in the box during his time at bat unless one of the eight exceptions in Rule 7-3-1 is met. Keeping the batter in the box dramatically increases the game's pace of play.

REFEREE

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Pace of Game Play

- The committee identified these areas in need of improvements that detract from what otherwise is an exciting and enjoyable game:
- Handling offensive and defensive charged conferences in a timely manner.
- Speeding up the time between innings and during pitching changes.
- Umpires diligently counting the number of warm-up pitches.
- The batter's box rule (the batter must generally keep one foot in the box during an at-bat). Unless it meets one of the eight exceptions:




Pace of Game Play (Batter's box rule exceptions)


- The batter swings at the pitch.
- The batter is forced out of the box by the pitch.
- The batter attempts a "drag bunt."
- The pitcher or catcher feints or attempts a play at any base.
- The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball.
- A member of either team requests and is granted "Time."
- The catcher leaves the catcher's box to adjust his equipment or give defensive signals.
- The catcher does not catch the pitched ball.



Compliant Bats



The head coach of each team is required to verify to the umpire-in-chief that his team's equipment is properly equipped in accordance with NFHS rules, prior to the start of each game.



POINT OF EMPHASIS

REFEREE

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POINT OF EMPHASIS

Compliant Bats



There are several ways bats can be altered illegally, including through the use of bat warming devices. Even though a bat meets the rules, once it has been altered, it is an illegal bat.

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POINT OF EMPHASIS

Compliant Bats



Removing the end cap off a bat makes it an illegal altered bat, with or without doing anything to the inside of the bat, such as inserting tennis balls or shaving the inside wall of the bat.

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Compliant Bats

- Altering bats by such methods as rolling, shaving the bat wall, flattening or otherwise manipulating the bat from its original manufactured condition is a **federal offense**.
- Not only is it illegal but it can cause injury or worse to a young person.
- The NFHS is committed to eliminating altered bats from interscholastic baseball.

NFHS

POINT OF EMPHASIS

Risk Minimization

Loose equipment on the field is a safety issue. Umpires and coaches must be diligent to ensure that there is no loose equipment in live-ball territory during a game.

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POINT OF EMPHASIS

Risk Minimization

Umpires must be aware when inclement weather is in the area. Play must be stopped at the first sound of thunder or the first sight of lightning for a minimum of 30 minutes.

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POINT OF EMPHASIS

Risk Minimization


When the bullpen is on the playing field, teams will use a player to "protect" the players warming up from batted balls. The protector is required to have a glove. A NOCSAE-approved helmet is recommended, but not required.

REFEREE

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Risk Minimization

- High school baseball reports some of the lowest injuries than other NFHS sports.
- Dedicated coaches and officials are the key to such success.
- Attention should be given to the following:
 - Loose equipment,
 - Weather conditions,
 - The role of the “protector”.





Good Sporting Behavior

POINT OF EMPHASIS



Each game is an opportunity for coaches, umpires and players to model respectful behavior. The positive values that are learned will serve players long after their baseball experience has concluded.

REFEREE

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Good Sporting Behavior

- Coaches and Umpires must work together.
 - Each contest is another opportunity for coaches and umpires to teach not only baseball skills, but also model respectful behavior as well as professional relationships.
- Game situations typically provide a coach the opportunity to identify a “teachable moment” to reinforce good sporting behavior.

