



2023 Baseball & Softball Coaches Handbook

and

Rules Survival Guide

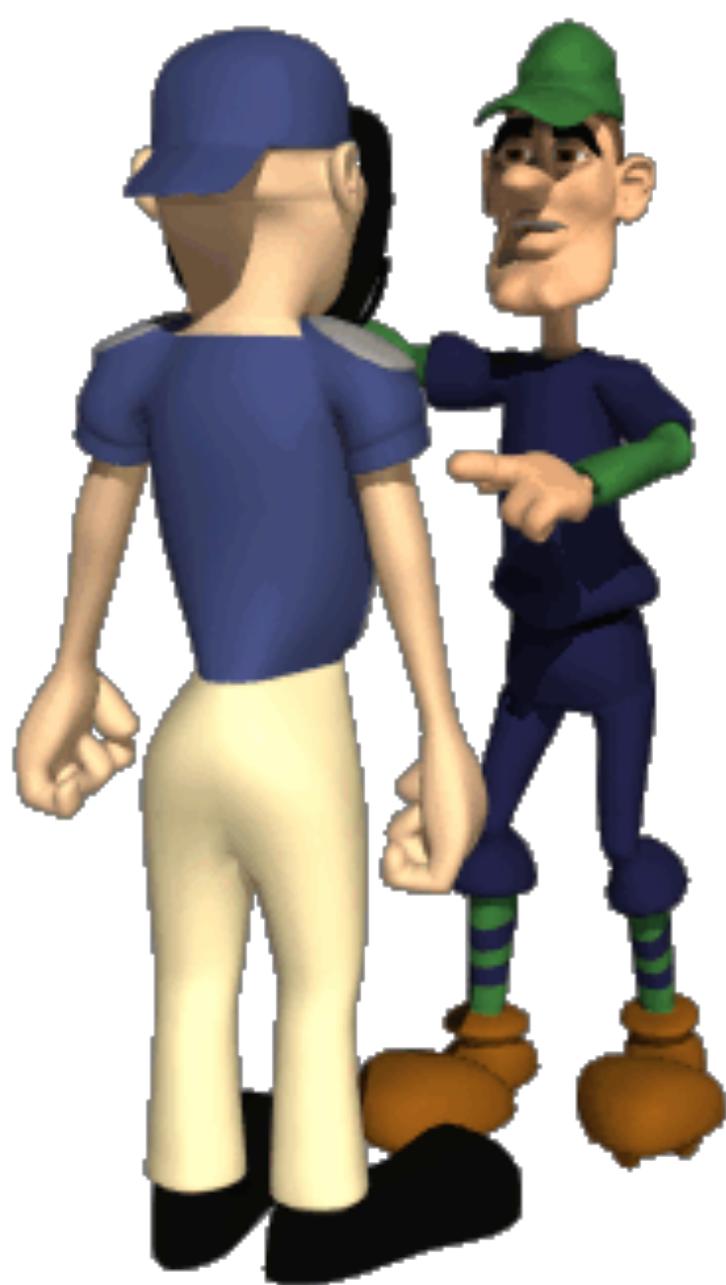


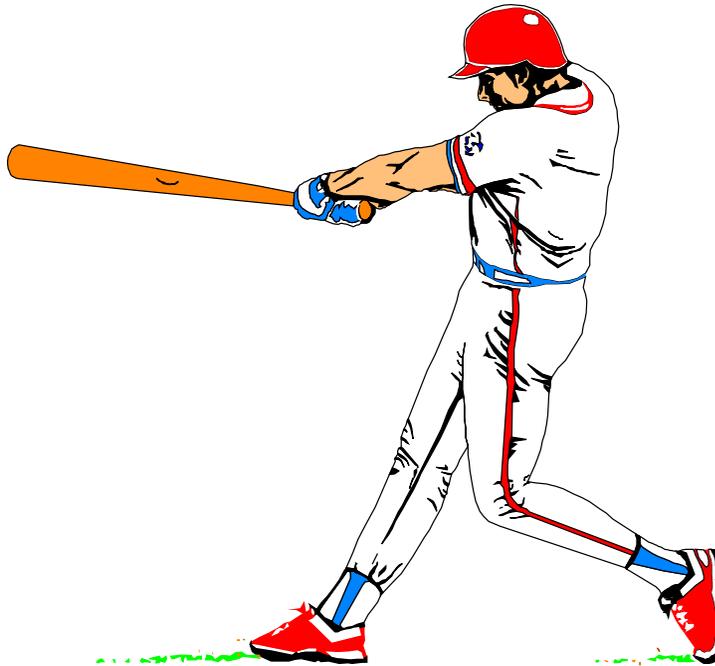
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NCOA Information

Introduction On behalf of the NCOA Board and Umpires, welcome to the 2023 High School Baseball and Softball Season. We look forward to providing quality and professional services to your players and school.

We hope this book provides you with the necessary information for rules and our contacts.

Thanks

Gary Frieders
Lead Baseball Instructor

Sean Beaton
Lead Softball Instructor

Mission Statement NCOA exists to provide quality and professional officials to schools, recreation departments and other contracting agencies; to ensure those games are played fairly in accordance with the intent and purpose of the rules.

Schedules PLEASE review your home and away schedules online regularly at:

www.northerncoastofficials.org/bat_ball_sked_date.php

Should you need to update, change or cancel games the NIGHT BEFORE or the DAY OF the game, please contact:

David Clark

- Home: (707) 528-4401 or Cell: (707) 888-9627
- Email: davidclarkiv@comcast.net

Should you need to update, change or cancel games BEFORE the season or several days into the future, please contact.

Gary Frieders

- (707) 538-5190 ext #1
 - cell 707 975-1141
 - email: ncoa@sonic.net
-

Baseball Rules Contact Questions about **baseball** rules should be addressed to:

Gary Frieders

- (707) 538-5190 ext #1
 - cell 707 975-1141
 - email: ncoa@sonic.net
-

Softball Rules Contact Questions about **softball** rules should be addressed to:

Sean Beaton

- Cell 478-0746 before 9:00pm
 - email: psbeaton@comcast.net
-

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NCOA Information, Continued

Umpires' Arrival

Umpires are to be at your school/field 30-minutes prior to start time. At least one umpire should check in with the home coach upon arrival.

If umpires have NOT checked in, not near the field or in the parking lot at least **25-minutes** before start of the game:

***Please call (707) 538-5190
and let us know umpires have not arrived.
Be specific with location, sport and level.***

NOTE: If you fail to check the confirmation schedule, Sunday reminder email and/or check the online web site schedule to confirm the game is in the umpire scheduling database we will NOT scramble to get you umpires if the games is not on the schedule.

Umpires should be on the field 7-minutes prior to the start of the game.

Handling Protests

Yes, we are human and make mistakes and get rules mixed up. When that happens and a coach wants to protest an application of a rule made by the umpire(s) (not a pure judgment call), STOP the game, get together with your partner, go to the rule book and try, at best, to rectify the situation and get it right, if you are wrong, before continuing the game.

If after consulting your partner and rulebook the coach still wants to protest, then accept the protest and move on with the game.

Call David Clark immediately after the game and also call:

- Gary Frieders for baseball,
- Sean Beaton for softball.

Umpires are not to be hard nosed and refuse to accept the protest nor attempt to rectify the situation.

⇒ ***If umpires do not follow the above policy and the protest is upheld which causes the game to be played from the protest point, umpires will NOT be paid for the game in which the protest occurred.***

Questionable Weather Policy



On questionable weather days please email ncoa@sonic.net or call NCOA assigner at (707) 538-5190. We will notify the umpires of any cancellations or changes.

If you send an email and do not receive an acknowledgement within 10 minutes please call 707 538-5190.

Please be specific when calling, emailing or texting NCOA in regards to the HOST SCHOOL, SPORT and LEVEL.

Umpires are to call the HOME coach or School for the level and sport they are working prior to departing for a game if the weather is questionable.

Make sure your school's contact information is correct with NCOA.

Running out of Sun Light Policy

Unless the field has working lights, NCOA's policy on the sun going down is:

If the sun is about to disappear, within 5 minutes, or the sun has disappeared, NO NEW inning may start. Once the sun disappears there is about 8 minutes of good sun light left and 8 minutes of bad sunlight left. This is a safety issue.

Coaches and Umpires

Introduction

Competition evokes emotion. When an “emotional” event occurs during a game we have to set a good example for the young players playing the game by acting accordingly. To avoid being restricted to the dugout or ejected coaches should keep the following in mind.

Goals and Expectations

The first thing to remember about umpires is that their goal for the game is different than most coaches, players and fans.

1. The coach wants to win. The umpire wants the game to proceed in an orderly manner.
2. The coach, players, and fans, wanting to win, tend to see the game from a “slanted” perspective. (Favoring their team.)
3. Most coaches want to control every aspect of the game—their players, the opponents, the tempo of the game—but he can’t control the umpires’ decisions.

You should expect umpires to:

1. Arrive on time and be dressed appropriately.
 2. Conduct themselves in a professional manner.
 3. Give effort on the diamond by moving to proper positions to get an angle to rule on plays.
 4. Make rulings that are clear violations of the rules.
 5. Consistency – applying same strike zone and other ruling to both teams.
 6. **But NOT be perfect.** They have a short period of time to render their ruling based on their angle of the play.
-

Dealing With Umpires



The magic way to deal with umpires – The Golden Rule – *Treat them as you would want to be treated by them.* Keep the following in mind:

- Your angle from 120+ feet away is different than the umpire’s.
- Remain calm when a call you don’t agree with goes against you.
- Don’t chip, yell or bark from the dugout – instead come out and discuss it with the umpire.
- Don’t make sarcastic comments, direct or indirect, towards the umpires.
- Don’t question an umpire’s integrity.
- Keep your players, assistant coaches and your fans under control.
- Make sure you know the rule before questioning an umpire on a rule. Know what calls are arguable and which are not.
- When the umpire is explaining the call or rule – LISTEN – don’t interrupt.



Ultimately the coach and umpire just may end up agreeing to disagree. Then let’s move on with the game.

SLICE Up the Coach

SLICE is an acronym that umpires should use when a coach approaches them about a call or ruling:

Show the coach respect.

Listen to what the coach is questioning. Do not interrupt.

Invoke judgment.

Choose words from the rule book.

Earn the coach’s respect with your words and actions.

Source: Billy Van Raaphorst

High School League Specific Rules

NBL, VVAL and Small Schools

SOFTBALL: The Vine Valley Athletic League (VVAL) and North Bay League (NBL) schools have adopted the following league specific rules for *softball*.

- All NBL softball games (both JV and Varsity) must use a double first base bag.
- 10 Run Rule on Varsity and Non-Varsity Games - After 5innings (or 4-1/2innings) if either team is ahead by 10 runs or more the game is over.
- Tie Breaker Rule at All Levels - Starting in the, **VVAL-9th inning; NBL-10th inning**, of a tied game the international tie-breaker will go into effect. The 9th batter scheduled to bat in that inning (usually the last out, but not always the case) will be placed on 2nd base to start each team's turn at bat in each inning until winner is determined.
- Ball - All Levels - The optic yellow ball will be used with NFHS Logo.

BASEBALL:

- VVAL schools have adopted the 10-run rule after 5 innings (or 4-1/2 innings) for **ALL** levels.
- **NBL schools:**
 - **Varsity:** 10-run rule NOT in effect.
 - **JV & Frosh:** 10-run rule IS NOT in effect unless the losing coach wants to throw the towel in.
- Small Schools: Check with coaches before the game.

The VVAL schools are: Petaluma, Casa Grande, Sonoma Valley, Justin-Siena, Napa, Vintage and American Canyon

The NBL schools are: Ukiah, Cardinal Newman, Santa Rosa, Montgomery, Windsor, Marie Carrillo, Rancho Cotate, Healdsburg, Analy, El Molino, Elsie Allen, Piner and St Vincents.

MCAL Specific Softball Rules

NCOA provides umpires to Marin County High Schools for Softball.

Marin County Athletic League (MCAL) schools have the following league specific rules:

- 10 Run Rule on Varsity and Non-Varsity Games - After 5innings (or 4-1/2innings) if either team is ahead by 10 runs or more the game is over.
- Tied Games - International tie breaker starting 10th inning.
- Ball - All Levels - The optic yellow ball will be used with NFHS Logo.

The MCAL schools are: Novato, San Marin, Terra Linda, Drake, San Rafael, Marin Catholic, Redwood, Tamalpais.

Small Schools

As far are as the small schools we don't know of any league specific rules. Check with the coaches at the pre-game conference before the game. For non-league games the home school's league rules will take precedence.

The small schools that NCOA provides umpires to are: Technology, Tomales, Calistoga, Credo, Cloverdale, St Helena, Roseland Collegiate Prep, Sonoma Academy and Victory Christian Academy.

Getting the Call Right

Introduction The first priority of an umpire is to must be to make the correct call. Umpire pride is important, but never as important as getting the play right.

It should be the philosophy of all umpires to seek to get the call right. This may involve the reversal of a previously rendered decision. However, the correct decision—not the pride of any umpire—must prevail.

Do Not Criticize or Interfere No umpire shall criticize or interfere with another umpire’s decision, unless asked by the one making it.

However, if there is a misinterpretation of a rule, it should be brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief. Therefore, except in special situations such as those outlined in the next paragraph, the umpire making the call must be the one to seek assistance of a partner.

Urged to Seek Help An umpire is urged to seek help when his view is blocked or positioning prevents him from seeing crucial elements of a play.

An umpire is also encouraged to seek help in instances when he has any doubt and a partner has additional information that could lead to the proper ruling.

When to Seek Help Umpires are not to seek help on plays on which they are 100% confident in their judgment and view of the play.

Head coaches are not entitled to a second opinion when the calling umpire is certain his decision is correct.

On the other hand, and contrary to past practice, umpires are not to “die with a call” in cases where the calling umpire is not 100% certain he is right; and another umpire has additional information which could lead to a proper ruling.

Seeking Help When an umpire seeks help, he should do so shortly after making his original call. He should not have a lengthy discussion with the head coach or others and then ask for help.

If the calling umpire seeks help, he should include ALL the other umpires. This conversation must take place away from players or coaches. Meeting with ALL umpires will eliminate multiple meetings that will unnecessarily delay the game.

Judgment Calls Judgment calls, which have traditionally not been subject to reversal, include:

- Steal and other tag plays (except if the ball is dropped without the umpire’s knowledge as discussed above);
- Force plays (when the ball is not dropped and foot is not pulled);
- Balls and strikes (other than check swings).

This practice shall continue.

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Getting the Call Right, Continued

When to Provide Additional Information

In the situations listed below, a partner who is 100% certain he has additional information unknown to the umpire making the call should approach unsolicited and alert the other umpire to such information.

However, the ultimate decision to change a call rests with the calling umpire.

- Deciding if a homerun is fair or foul.
- Deciding whether a batted ball left the playing field for a homerun or ground rule double.
- Cases where a foul tip is dropped or trapped by the catcher.
- Cases where a foul fly ball is caught or not caught.
- Cases when an umpire clearly errs in judgment because they did not see a ball dropped or juggled after making a tag or force.
- Spectator interference plays.
- Balks called by an umpire who clearly did not realize the pitcher's foot was off the rubber.

Conclusion

Overall, umpires are urged to seek help on reversible plays in which they may have erred by not seeing a crucial element of a play.

Such meetings, while necessary, should be infrequent and not become a substitute for umpires seeking proper angles, exercising sound judgment, and having the conviction to stay with a call that an umpire believes was properly made.



You can't reason with an unreasonable person.

Gotta Know These Rules

Introduction Umpiring is more than just calling ball/strike, fair/foul and safe/out. Although these make up 98% of the action that occur in a game, as an umpire, you must be able to handle the following like they are second nature. *You gotta know these rules, cold!!*

The following are only the concepts that revolve around the particular rule. Knowing these will help you most, if not all, of the time when the situation occurs. Refer to your specific rulebook for further clarification.

Interference Interference is caused by the offense, the team at bat. The following are the general rules that surround interference rules:

- When interference occurs the ball is dead immediately with exception of coaches interference.
 - The player that caused the interference is out. There are situations that another runner will also be called out, example: potential double play, or retired runner interferes with defense attempting another play.
 - Under NFHS Rules runners are returned to base occupied at *time of interference*, unless forced because the batter gets first.
 - Exception is Force Play Side Rule Interference – in which case runners are returned to base occupied at time of pitch.
-

Obstruction Obstruction is caused by the defense, the team in the field. Under high school rules, obstruction is always a delayed dead ball. When obstruction occurs the runner is protected to the base they would have gotten had obstruction not occurred.

- If a runner is put out at that base, the runner will be awarded that base.
- If a runner is put out at a base beyond the protected base, the runner will be out.

Under high school *baseball* rules an obstructed runner will always be awarded at least one base beyond the base they last touched.

Under high school *softball* rules an obstructed runner will be awarded the base they would have gotten had the obstruction not occurred. Thus they are not always sent to the next base if in the umpire's judgment they would not have advanced on that play.

Umpire Interference If an umpire interferes with a batted ball before it passes the infielders (other than pitcher), the ball is dead immediately and the batter is awarded first base. Runners advance only if forced by the batter getting first base.

If an umpire interferes with the catcher it is a delayed dead ball. If the catcher is able to throw the runner out on the initial action, the out will stand. Otherwise the runner(s) are returned to the base occupied at the time of pitch.

In all other situations the ball remains live as the umpire is considered "dirt".

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Gotta Know These Rules, Continued

Two Runners Occupying Same Base

When two runners are occupying the same base, who has a right to that base depends on the following. If the defense tags both runners the runner that does not own the base will be declared out.

- Lead runner forced – the trail runner owns the base.
 - Lead runner not forced – the lead runner owns the base.
-

Scoring Runs

A runner scores one run each time he/she legally advances to and touches first, second, third and then home plate *before* there are three outs to end the half-inning.

A run *IS NOT* scored if the runner advances to home plate during action in which the third out is made as follows:

- By the batter-runner before he touches first base;
- By another runner being forced out (a runner returning to a base on a caught fly ball *is not* forced);
- By a non-forced runner touching home after the third out;
- By a preceding runner (lead runner) who is declared out because he failed to touch one of the bases or left a base too soon on a caught fly ball;
- When a third out is declared during a play in which an umpire observed a base-runner infraction, and the defense properly appeals, resulting in a force-out (this out takes precedence if enforcement of it would negate a score);
- When there is more than one out declared by the umpire which terminates the half inning, the defensive team may select the out which is to its advantage as in a fourth out.

Note: When a winning run is scored in the last half inning of a regulation game or extra innings as a result of the batter advancing to first forcing the runner on third home all runners must touch their next before the game is over.

If a forced runner does not touch the next base the appeal process will be in effect.

Designated Hitters (HS Baseball)

Designated hitters must be noted prior to the start of the game.

High School Baseball: A designated hitter and the player being batted for are “locked” into the same position in the batting order. The role of the designated hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

- The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the designated hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch hits or pinch runs for the designated hitter; or
- The designated hitter or any previous designated hitter assumes a defensive position.
- Defensive Player/DH – A defensive player can be listed also as a DH when line-up is turned in.

Example: #34 John Jones P/DH.

This player can be removed as a defensive player and remain as DH.

The player may re-enter as a defensive player – ONCE (Starters have re-entry status).

DH is lost if a sub pinch runs or pinch hits for the DH.

High School Softball: Does not use a DH. They use a DP/Flex rule. Consult the rule book for clarification.

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Gotta Know These Rules, Continued

Re-Entry

When a player legally re-enters the game they must enter into the same batting position they previously occupied.

- High School Softball and USA, all substitutes can re-enter once into same batting slot they were previously in.
- High School Baseball substitutes cannot re-enter into same batting slot they were previously in.

There are no exceptions to this rule. Example: A team has used all their eligible substitutes. A player is injured and can't continue. The team will have to play "short handed" and when that batting position comes to bat it is an automatic out.

Base Awards

First things first – there is no such award known as "one-plus-one." Base awards are always:

- One, Two, Three or Four bases.

Awards are always from the base occupied. Occupied means last legally touched (or considered to have touched such as a runner missing a base). Here are five simple base award rules that occur the most:

- One by the pitcher from the rubber;
- One by a fielder unintentionally carrying the ball out-of-play;
- Two by a fielder's throw;
- Two by batted ball that touched the ground going out-of-play;
- Four by batted ball going over fence in fair territory (home run).

Clarifications:

- If a pitcher steps off the rubber in an attempt to pick off a runner, he/she is an infielder thus is governed by the, "two by a fielder's throw."
- High School Softball: When a ball is thrown out-of-play by any fielder the award is always based on the base occupied at the time of throw.
- High School Baseball: If an infielder throws the ball out of play and it is the first play, the award will be from base occupied at time of pitch. Otherwise it will be from the base occupied at time of throw.

If a "fielder" throws the ball out of play and runners are occupying second and/or third at time of pitch those runners will get home. Base awards for runner on first and/or the batter-runner will have to be determined based on above.

Note: When two runners are between first and second on an overthrow into dead ball territory, the lead runner receives two bases and the following runner is awarded one, since both runners cannot share the same awarded base.

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Gotta Know These Rules, Continued

Slide Rule Runners are never required to slide. Do not use the statement “the runner is out because he/she did not slide.”

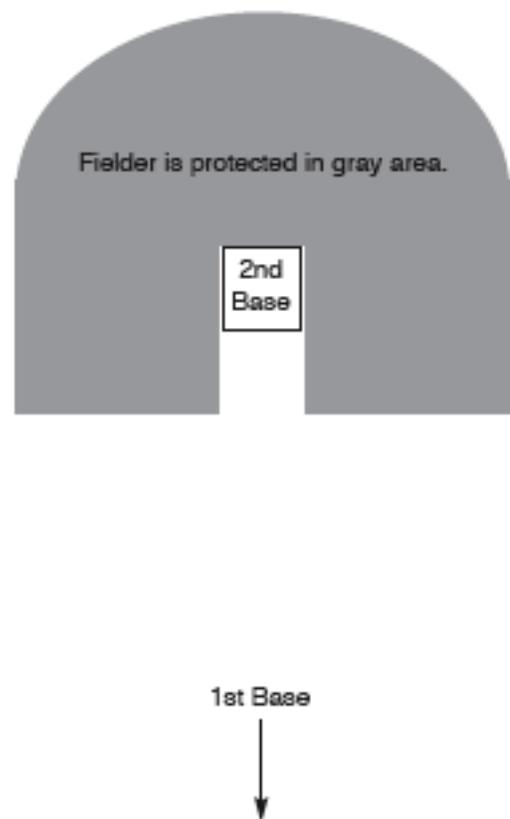
Force Play Slide **High School Baseball**

Rule: **Only:** The runner, on a force play:

- Must execute a legal slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases. Direct line is defined as torso of body and feet directly into base.
- May slide or run in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder
- **Does not apply to plays at home if runner executes legal slide directly into home plate.**

Think of a coffin with the ends open. The runner must slide into the coffin or away from the fielder.

Force-play slide rule diagram



All Other Slide Situations: Runners must avoid contact with fielders to the best of their ability. This includes:

- Executing a legal slide.
- Running or sneaking around a fielder.
- Stopping to avoid a fielder making a play.
- Jumping, hurdling or leaping over a fielder who is lying on the ground without making contact. Jumping, hurdling or leaping over a fielder who is not lying on the ground is prohibited. Diving over a player is also prohibited.
- Jumping over a fielder’s outstretched glove.

⇒ ***If a runner makes contact and causes “interference” with a play at home plate or a base, state “the runner is out for interference.”***

A “retired” runner should run in a direction away from the fielder. He/she cannot interfere with a fielder’s chance to make a play at another base.

Malicious Contact: If the runner remains on their feet OR slides illegally crashing into a fielder, he/she will be declared out (unless already scored) and ejected.

Generally speaking, any contact at or above the waist should be ruled malicious.

Continued on next page

Gotta Know These Rules, Continued

Infield Fly Rule There are three parts to this rule:

- 1 Runners on first and second, or first, second and third;
- 2 Less than two outs;
- 3 Fly ball in or near the infield that can be caught with reasonable effort;

We have to make sure #3 is part of the play - the fielder should be camped under the ball for an easy catch (if dropped it is still and out).

The ball remains live and runners advance at their own risk whether the ball is caught or not. If the ball drops untouched and rolls foul before 1st or 3rd, it is a foul ball.

Keeping One Foot In Batter's Box

This applies only to high school baseball and USA Youth Level Fastpitch. The batter is required to keep one foot in the batter's box throughout the time at bat to avoid unnecessary delays.

Exceptions: A batter **may leave** the batter's box when:

- The batter swings at a pitch,
- The batter is forced out of the box by the pitch,
- The batter attempts a "drag bunt",
- The defensive team 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 catcher's box to adjust his equipment or give defensive signals,
- The catcher does not catch the ball,
- A wild pitch or passed ball occurs.
- Either the pitcher or catcher feints a play at any base.

Penalty: If the batter leaves the batter's box, **delays the game**, and none of the above exceptions apply, the plate umpire shall charge a strike to the batter. **Only if batters begin to delay the game and take advantage of the spirit of the rule will enforcement be necessary.** The pitcher need not pitch, and the ball remains alive.

Note: Instead of trying to remember all the times a batter can leave the box, just remember:

If a batter does not swing at a pitch and the ball is immediately returned to the pitcher, and the pitcher does not delay, the batter cannot step out of the box and delay the game.

Detached Player Equipment

For a ball that touches detached player equipment that is thrown or used by the defender the award is from the time of infraction and it is a delayed dead ball. If a runner advances beyond the awarded base the infraction is ignored.

- Two by detached player equipment that touches a thrown ball:
 - Three by detached player equipment that touches a batted ball:
 - Four by detached player equipment that touches a batted ball if a fly ball was going over the fence in fair territory.
-

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Gotta Know These Rules, Continued

Appeals Chart With the various levels of baseball and softball NCOA covers, you must know the appeal process for runners *missing bases or leaving a base early on a caught fly ball* for the game you are working. The following chart should help you understand the various rule differences:

High School Baseball	Summer Baseball	High School Softball	USA Softball
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defense may make a “live ball” appeal • If the ball is dead any <i>infielder or coach</i> may make a “verbal” appeal. They do not have to throw the ball to the base. • The observing umpire will make the ruling. If you are not the observing umpire, direct the appeal to the proper umpire. • Consult the Rulebook for more information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball must be live*. • Defense must make a verbal statement that they are appealing “Ump, runner on third left early.” • Defense must tag base or runner while ball is live. • Defense gets one chance to correctly make the appeal. If they fail to properly appeal they cannot make an appeal on the same runner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defense may make a “live ball” appeal. • If the ball is dead any <i>defensive player</i>, with or without possession of the ball, may make a “verbal” appeal. They do not have to throw the ball to the base. • The observing umpire will make the ruling. If you are not the observing umpire, direct the appeal to the proper umpire. • See Rulebook for more information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defense may make a “live ball” appeal. • If the ball is dead any <i>infielder</i> may make a “verbal” appeal. They do not have to throw the ball to the base. • The observing umpire will make the ruling. If you are not the observing umpire, direct the appeal to the proper umpire.

APPEAL NOTES:

- Summer baseball applies to all leagues that use Professional Rules.
- A “live ball” is a ball that is still in play — time has not been granted nor the ball is out-of-play.
- A “dead ball” is when time has been granted or the ball has gone out-of-play.

* **In Summer Baseball**, if the ball is dead the ball must be made live before the defense can make any appeal. The following three things, in order, must occur to make a dead-ball alive:

- (1) Pitcher with ball on the rubber;
- (2) Batter is batters-box and ready;
- (3) Plate umpire says or indicates “play.”

The pitcher must then legally disengage the rubber, verbally inform the umpire of their intention to appeal, and touch the base while holding the ball (they can walk the ball over or throw it over.).

A lot of things could happen during this process:

- If the pitcher disengages the rubber improperly, it’s a balk;
- If the pitcher throws the ball out-of-play, you must award bases accordingly; and the defense cannot make another appeal on that runner.

Suggestion: When working a game with younger players, if it looks like they are going to do it wrong, “walk” them through it. This will teach them to do it properly in the future.



***We are what we repeatedly do,
EXCELLENCE, then is not an act but a habit.***

Gotta Know These Rules, Continued

Coaches in Dugouts

Rule 3-3-1: A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not...

- a. ...Leave the dugout during a live ball for an unauthorized purpose.
- b. ...be outside the designated dugout (bench) or bullpen area if not a batter, runner, on-deck batter, or one of the nine players on defense.

Coaches have made comments to umpires, “I’m a coach, I can be out.”; “I’m giving signs.”; “No one enforces that rule.”

This is a huge liability issue for umpires working the game along with a sportsmanship issue. Coaches feel that they can be outside the dugout, then when a close call goes against them they make comments out in the open. Sure they’ll make comments from the dugout, but at least it is not out in the open drawing undue attention creating or drawing comments back from umpires to coaches who are out on the field.

Umpires should allow coaches to come out of the dugout during dead balls or “lull in the action” (similar to dead ball) to coach their players. But once play goes hot (pitcher on rubber getting signs) they must move back inside.

PreGame Warm-ups

A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not commit any unsportsmanlike act to include, but not limited to:

Being in live ball territory (excluding team’s bullpen area) during the opponent’s infield practice prior to the start of the game.

This is a rule that came into effect several years ago for safety reasons and sportsmanship “taunting” issues.

Base Coaches Wearing Helmets

CIF BYLAW 2502 On January 30, 2016 the CIF Federated Council voted to require all base coaches to wear a protective helmet. This rule goes into effect immediately and applies to all levels of high school softball. This is the wording of 2502:

It is required that adult base coaches wear a protective helmet. Play will not continue until compliance with this rule is met. It is recommended that the helmet meet NOCSAE standards. As per NFHS rules, players occupying coaches boxes must wear a NOCSAE approved helmet. (Double ear flaps).

Adult coaches are not required to wear a NOCSAE approved helmet, but they must wear a protective helmet. This rule applies to any team playing in the state of California. The plate umpire shall not put the ball in play to begin a new half inning until he is sure all base coaches are properly equipped. An adult coach who does not wish to be in compliance should be ejected from the contest.

General Rules Information

Introduction You should also have a solid knowledge of the following rules:

NCS Ejection Policy The North Coast Section (NCS) has the following rule in regards to an ejection of a high school player or *coach*:

If a player or *coach* is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct from a game that player cannot participate in the next game. The coach cannot be anywhere near the field.

An “Incident Report” form must be submitted online anytime a player or coach is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct. The form must be completed as soon as possible following the game involving a significant incident (ejection, threats, physical contact, etc), completed online within *four (4) hours*.

⇒ *Umpires must call David Clark or Gary Frieders as soon as possible after the game involving a significant incident and submit an incident report online within four (4) hours after the conclusion of the game.*

State Concussion Law 2012 State Law – AB25:

Youth sports: Schools will be required to immediately remove student athletes from sporting activities if they appear to have sustained a concussion or head injury, and the students would be barred from returning until they are medically evaluated and given written permission to play by a licensed health care provider.

Speed Up Rules No league that NCOA works adopted the speed up rules. However, during *non-league* or tournament games if *both coaches* want to use speed-up-rules allow it.

Eligible Substitutes On Lineup Card The name and shirt number of eligible substitutes should be on the lineup card that is submitted to plate umpire prior to the game.

⇒ *There is no penalty if this is not done nor does this preclude the substitute from playing.*

Catchers Warming Up Pitchers Any non-adult player warming up a pitcher either on the diamond or in the bullpen while in the crouch position shall wear a mask with a throat protector. If they are standing they are not required to wear a mask.

⇒ *High School baseball a head protector must also be worn.*

The main reason for wearing a mask in the crouch position is they are restricted in their movements and there is a greater chance of the ball skipping off the top of the glove and hitting their pretty face.

Blocking Bases/Plate A defensive player may “block” a base or home plate if the ball arrives ahead of or approximately at the same time as the runner.

If a runner arrives ahead of the ball and a fielder is “blocking” or preventing the runner from reaching the base/plate obstruction shall be called and the runner awarded that base or plate.

Continued on next page

General Rules Information, Continued

On Deck Circle Batters warming up **MAY NOT** use the opponent's on deck circle. Not even between innings or when a new pitcher is warming up.

Coaches / Equipment in Dugout Coaches are required to be in the dugout, unless they are a base coach. You may allow them to step out during non-playing action or dead balls to quickly communicate to their team, but then they should be back in their dugout.

Non-baseball equipment (such as chairs, buckets, etc) are not allowed on the field.

⇒ **Umpires are to address these items in the pre-game conference with coaches.**

Blood Rule A player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on his/her uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered.

If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgment.

The umpire shall:

- Stop the game and allow treatment.
- Immediately call a coach, trainer, or other "authorized person" to the injured player.
- Apply the rules of the game regarding substitutions, re-entry, and short-handed player if necessary.

⇒ **The uniform rule violation will not be enforced if a uniform change is required.**

Double First Base The following rules are in effect when using a double first base in Softball:

- A batted ball hitting the white base is fair.
 - A batted ball hitting the orange base is foul.
 - The orange base may only be utilized by the batter-runner.
If the batter-runner touches only the white bag on a play at first the defense must make an appeal. Touching only the white base is treated as missing the base.
 - The batter-runner may use the orange base on the first attempt at first base; however, should he/she reach and go beyond first base, he/she must return to the white base.
 - If the batter-runner rounds first base on a hit, he/she must return to the white base.
 - When tagging up on a fly ball, the white base must be used.
 - On an attempted pick-off play from the catcher (FP and 16" only), the runner must return to the white base.
 - If the throw is coming from foul territory the defense can touch the orange bag and the runner can touch the white bag. This is to prevent a cross-over collision.
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General Rules Information, Continued

Catch & No Carry

Terminology to help you remember the rule when a fielder catches a ball in live ball territory and carries the ball into dead ball territory.

“Catch and No Carry” means that if a fielder catches a ball then carries it into dead ball territory the ball becomes dead and any runners are awarded one base from time the ball leaves the field of play. Easy to remember: No = Dead.

⇒ **All baseball rules are now:
“Catch and No Carry.”**

Arguable Calls

Arguable calls by the head coach are balks or illegal pitches, safe/outs, fair/fouls, catch/no catches, odd rulings, etc.

Balls/Strikes and check swings are NOT arguable. A team warning should be issued the first time a team argues balls/strikes.

Only head coaches are allowed to discuss/argue a call. Assistant coaches who leave their position to argue a call are subject to being formally warned and restricted to dugout along with head coach or ejected.

Note: If at any time the coach or player attacks an umpire personally that is grounds for ejection.



“Whoa, whoa ... What? Really?! That's not even close! ... Next!!”

Granting Batter's Time or Not

Umpire's should not be granting batter's time just because they ask. That's bold general statement with no guidelines.

When should the plate umpire grant a batter's request for time? To answer that question there is one of three components plate umpire's need to recognize before granting time:

- Safety.
- Lull in the action after a play.
- Status of a potential pitch.

Let's break each one of these components down.

SAFETY: A safety issue should cause the plate umpire to stop play *just before* the pitcher is about to start his motion to deliver the pitch. Issues such as, but not limited to:

Bugs or bees near the batter's eyes;

Gust of wind causing dirt or dust in the batter's, and probably the catcher's and umpire's eyes; or

An inappropriate comment by anyone causing everyone to lose focus.

The plate umpire should grant time, *emphatically and immediately*, and step out and away from behind the catcher to confirm, so that if a pitch is delivered, the pitch will not be called. This should avoid the batter or anyone getting hit by a thrown ball from the pitcher.

LULL IN THE ACTION AFTER A PLAY: Once a play or situation has ended and there a "lull" in the action while the ball is live and the pitcher has the ball on the dirt area or on the rubber getting signs. During this lull in the action the pitcher is "cold" with a low probability of another play occurring. During this lull the batter may need to:

- "Groom" his batter's box;
- Get signs from his coach; or
- Talk to his coach, aka offensive charged conference.

The plate umpire may grant time as these are natural occurrences in the game to grant time.

Granting Batter's Time or Not, Continued

In the first two bullet points above: If the pitcher is respecting these the plate umpire should NOT have to hold his hand up to stop the pitcher. Holding the hand up means the ball is dead and nothing can happen maybe preventing a potential pick off of a runner not paying attention. However, the plate umpire should monitor the pitcher to make sure he doesn't start action that could lead to pitching. This usually occurs at the lower levels of baseball.

In the third bullet point the plate umpire is required to call time as a charged conference will cause the ball to be dead. Don't forget to record the offense charged conference on your line-up card.

STATUS OF A POTENTIAL PITCH: This is the "danger zone". Plate umpires have too often granted the batter's request for time when he should not have. Granting time has gotten the plate umpire yelled at from the opposing dugout about causing potential injury to the pitcher because he had to stop suddenly or causing injury to the batter because the pitcher threw at him for calling time.

When the pitcher has received his sign from the catcher and is ready to pitch plate umpire's need to recognize the pitcher is now "hot". The situation is "hot" thus a pitch or pick off is about to occur. Batter in this situation is usually trying to "disrupt" the pitcher's rhythm.

When should the plate umpire grant time or not? If it is NOT a "safety" issue, as mentioned above, the plate umpire should count to three. If, during this three count, the pitcher starts any action to begin his delivery to pitch or pick off a runner the plate umpire SHOULD NOT grant time to the batter. Even if the batter steps out of the box as he calls time. The plate umpire should get down to call the pitch a ball or strike accordingly. If, by chance, the pitcher stops, call time and reset the situation. A batter causing the pitcher to stop is NOT a balk!

Once the plate umpire reaches a count of three, and the pitcher still has not started any action to pitch, the plate umpire should grant time to the batter. This is called a "FREEZE". In this case the pitcher is freezing the batter and runner(s) thus disrupting their rhythm. Grant time with the exposed hand and motion with opposite hand (hand nearest to the batter) to keep the batter in the box. Once everyone is ready again say and indicate "play".

Written by Gary Frieders

CIF Baseball Pitching Limitation Rule

Introduction

The following is the CIF baseball pitching limitation rule with respect to pitch count and required days of rest:

Pitch Count Limits and Required Rest	Level	Maximum Contest Pitch Limit	0 Days Rest Required	1 Day Rest Required	2 Days Rest Required	3 Days Rest Required
	Varsity	110 Pitches	1-30 Pitches	31-50 Pitches	51-75 Pitches	76+ Pitches
	Freshman; F/S; JV	90 Pitches	1-30 Pitches	31-50 Pitches	51-75 Pitches	76+ Pitches

Further Clarifications

- A. A pitcher may finish the current batter if the Maximum Contest Pitch Limit is reached during that at-bat.
- B. Pitches thrown and appearances made in a no game (i.e., rainout, power failure, etc.) shall count toward the totals.
- C. At the end of each half inning, the head coaches will confirm and both team books will record the pitch count for all pitchers who threw a pitch in that half inning. In the case of a discrepancy, the home book is considered the official book.
- D. Each school must keep a record of all pitches thrown by each of their players in each game and make this available to their respective Section Office upon request.
- E. Any violation constitutes a forfeit of the contest.

Questions and Answers

Q: How is a day of rest defined?

A: A day of rest is defined as a calendar day. For example, if a pitcher throws 76 or more pitches in a Monday game thus requiring three-days rest before being allowed to pitch again, those days of rest would be Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday allowing that pitcher to pitch again on Friday.

Q: If a pitcher exceeds the maximum number of allowable pitches with respect to the required days of rest while finishing a batter, how are the required number of rest days calculated?

A: The required days of rest is determined by the actual number of pitches thrown. For example, if a pitcher starts a batter with 48 pitches, finishes the batter with 53 pitches and is then removed from the game, that pitcher would be required to rest for two days before making another appearance.

Q: What, if any, role do the umpires play in the confirmation and recording of the pitch count after each half inning?

A: The umpires are asked to ensure that the teams are exchanging the required information but the actual recording of the pitch count is up to the head coach from each school.

Q: Do Warm-up pitches count towards the player's pitch count?

A: No.

Q: Does an intentional base on balls count towards the player's pitch count?

A: No.

Field Markings and Baseball Balls

- Field Markings PLEASE have all lines for the field marked accordingly:
- **Batters' Boxes – Inside Lines Marked Too.**
 - **Fair/Foul Lines – Marked all the way down to the fence.**
 - **3-Foot Runners Lane Marked.**
 - **On Deck Batter's Circles – Drawn and safe distance from home plate.**
 - **Dead Ball Lines – Marked where needed.**

Baseballs PLEASE have at least six (6) or more baseballs, *marked with NFHS and NOCSAE logo*, ready (rubbed up) for the plate umpire prior to the start of the game.

They don't have to be "pearls" but at least be "eligible" to be used.

ALL FOUL Balls and Passed Balls with bases empty - Please "funnel" game balls through the home dugout so that plate umpire only has one source of re-loading their ball bag(s).

Your pitcher should be looking for a new baseball from home plate area from either the catcher or the umpire.

This helps with the pace of play.

On-deck batters should NEVER put the ball(s) on the ground that they will bring to the plate umpire.

Baseball Line Up Options and the DH Rule

- Introduction** Each Team has One of Three Line Up options to choose from before the game:
- #1 Straight Nine - No DH
 - #2 DH for another player - same as in the past.
 - #3 Defensive Player / DH - *** *NEW* ***

CAN NOT change after line up turned in.

Straight Nine – No DH Line Up Option #1 - No DH:

- Same as in the past.
 - Straight Nine player line up.
 - CANNOT add DH after line-up turned in.
 - Starters have Re-Entry status.
 - Substitutes DO NOT have re-entry status.
-

DH for Another Player

Line Up Option #2 - DH for another player:

- Same as in the past.
 - Both players “LOCKED” into same batting slot.
 - Each Player, the DH and the Defensive Player, can be subbed for.
 - Starters have re-entry status. Each Player, the DH and the Defensive Player, are “Starters”.
 - DH is lost if DH plays defense.
 - Substitutes DO NOT have re-entry status.
-

Defensive Player / DH

Line Up Option #3 - Defensive Player / DH *** *NEW* ***

- Starting Defensive Player has TWO Positions:
 - 1) Defensive Player and
 - 2) Designated Hitter.Thus 9 player line-up with a DH - ***** A restriction does apply.***
 - The “Defensive player” may be subbed for by any legal substitute and the original Defensive Player/DH is now just DH (10 player line up).
Both locked into same batting order slot.
 - If “Defensive Player” is subbed for, the original player/DH (starter) may re-enter back on defense ONE TIME (back to 9 player line up).
 - ***** The Restriction:*** The role of “Designated Hitter” is LOST for remainder of the game when:
 - 1) A sub or former sub for the “defensive” role enters as a hitter, or
 - 2) Starting Defensive Player/DH is subbed for either as a hitter or a runner.
-

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Baseball Line Up Options and the DH Rule, Continued

Example 1: Defensive Player / DH

Example:

- A Team's Line up turned in at start of game:
... #34 Daniels - 1B/DH
 - Later in game #12 Smith replaces #34 Daniels at first base but #34 Daniels remains as DH.
 - Both locked into same batting order slot.
 - Later in game #34 Daniels can replace #12 Smith as a defensive player once since #34 Daniels has starter/re-entry status.
-

Example 2: Defensive Player / DH

Example:

- A Team's Line up turned in at start of game:
... #34 Daniels - P/DH
... #12 Smith - 1B
 - During game coach moves #34 Daniels to 1B/DH and:
Moves #12 Smith at 1B to Pitch,
or
Brings in #4 Jones to Pitch replacing #12 Smith.
 - #34 Daniels is now the 1B/DH.
-

Example 3: Defensive Player / DH

Example:

- A Team's Line up turned in at start of game:
... #34 Daniels - P/DH
 - During game coach brings in #12 Smith to Pitch and #34 Daniels remains as DH.
 - Later in Game coach pinch hits or runs #12 Smith, or another player, for #34 Daniels.
 - ****** DH is lost. ****** #12 Smith or replacement must play Defense.
-

