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**2012
Baseball
& Softball
Coaches
Handbook**



and

**Survival
Guide**

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NCOA Information

Introduction On behalf of the NCOA Board and Umpires, welcome to the 2012 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
(707) 538-5190 • 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) 237-5250 • email: ncoa@sonic.net

Baseball Contact Questions about baseball rules should be addressed to:

Gary Frieders
(707) 237-5250
email: ncoa@sonic.net

Softball Contact Questions about softball rules should be addressed to:

Sean Beaton
(707) 795-2407 or 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 and let him/her know they are there.

If umpires have NOT checked in and are no where near your field or in the parking lot at least 20-minutes before start of the game, please (707) 538-5190 and let us know umpires have not arrived.

NOTE: If you fail to check the confirmation schedule and/or check the online web site schedule we will not scramble to get you umpires.

Umpires should be on the field 10-minutes prior to the start of the game.

Softball umpires are required to check the legality of softball bats and helmets so have them available in your dugout. Baseball umpires are no longer required to do so.

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.

Don't be hard nosed and refuse to accept the protest nor attempt to rectify the situation.

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

Questionable Weather Policy



On bad weather days umpires please be in contact with the NCOA assigner by **CALLING (707) 538-5190**. We will notify the umpires of any cancellations or changes.

DO NOT EMAIL us on the day of the game. Always CALL!

Please be specific when calling in regards to the SPORT and LEVEL.

Also, advise your school's office of the status of the game(s) scheduled for that day as umpires are also to contact the school if they don't hear from us.

Running out of Sun Light Policy

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

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 sun light left. This is a safety issue.

High School League Specific Rules

SCL & NBL and Small Schools

SOFTBALL: The Sonoma County League (SCL) and North Bay League (NBL) schools have adopted the following league specific rules for *softball*.

- 10 Run Rule in Non-Varsity Games Only - After 5-innings (or 4-1/2 innings) if either team is ahead by 10 runs or more the game is over.
- A Varsity coach may “throw in the towel” after 5 innings (or 4-1/2 innings).
- Tie Breaker Rule at All Levels - Starting in the, **SCL-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.
- Weather or lighting end games: Use the rule book. There is no adopted policy for this cases by Leagues, NCS or State.

BASEBALL:

- SCL 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 in effect.
- Small Schools: Check with coaches before the game.
- Weather or lighting end games: Use the rule book. There is no adopted policy for this cases by Leagues, NCS or State.

The SCL schools are: Healdsburg, Windsor, Analy, Sonoma, El Molino, Petaluma and Casa Grande

The NBL schools are: Ukiah, Cardinal Newman, Ursuline, Santa Rosa, Piner, Montgomery, Elsie Allen, Marie Carrillo and Rancho Cotate.

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:

- (1) 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.
- (2) Tied Games - International tie breaker starting 10th inning.
- (3) Ball - All Levels - The optic yellow ball will be used.
- (4) Weather or lighting end games: Use the rule book. There is no adopted policy for this cases by Leagues, NCS or State.

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

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: Marin Academy, Tomales, Calistoga, Geyserville, Rincon Valley Christian, Cloverdale, St Helena and Santa Rosa Christian.

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.

Continued on next page

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.
 - Runners are returned to base occupied, unless forced because the batter gets first.
-

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.

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 ASA, all substitutes can re-enter once.
- High School Baseball substitutes cannot re-enter.

There are no exceptions to this rule. Example: A team has used all there 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 Rule:

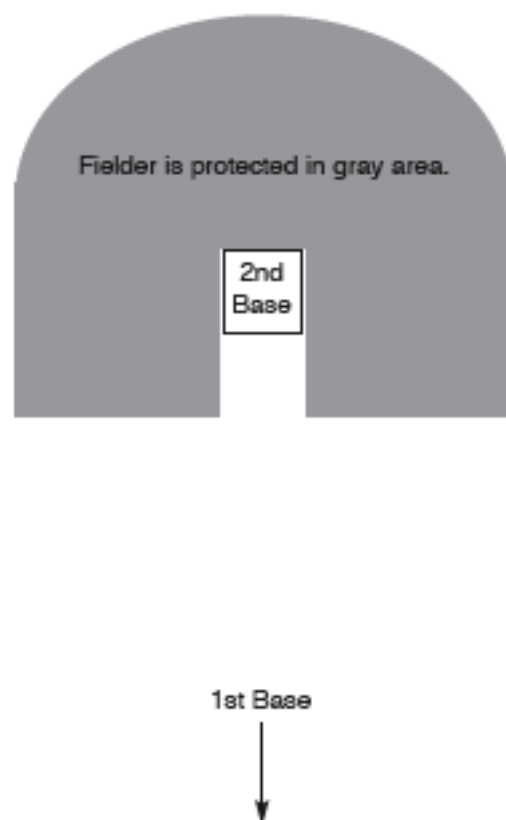
High School Baseball

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.

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 and, **with great force**, crashes into a fielder who has the ball, he/she will be declared out (unless already scored) and ejected.

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 ASA 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	ASA 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.***

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*.

⇒ *You 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.*

CIF and State Concussion Policy CIF Rule Modification 2011; and 2012 State Law:

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.

The measure is AB25, by Assemblywoman Mary Hayashi, D-Castro Valley.

Speed Up Rules No league that NCOA works adopted the speed up rules. However, during *non-league* 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.

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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.

⇒ *Address these items in your 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 & Carry” vs “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 Carry” means that if a fielder, after catching a live ball, carries the ball into dead ball territory and remains on his/her feet, the ball remains alive, runners advance at their own risk and the fielder can throw out of this 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.

⇒ *Pro and College Baseball Rules are the only rules that allow “Catch and Carry” all other rules are “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 is subject to an ejection.

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

High School - Pro Baseball Rule Differences

Introduction	<p>The following are the significant rule differences between High School (HS) and Professional Baseball (PRO).</p> <p>Other differences are related to safety, philosophy, and ease of game administration.</p> <p>Basic Pro rules are used by most summer league programs (Connie Mack, American Legion, Babe Ruth Senior League, Little League, and Semi-Pro) with their own modifications.</p>
Legal Bat	<p>HS: Diameter at thickest part: 2⁵/₈" or less. Length: 36" or less. Weight: A bat shall not weigh less than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g. a 33" long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces.) Non-wood bats must be marked "BBCOR".</p> <p>PRO: Diameter at thickest part: 2³/₄" or less. Length: 42" or less. Weight: No restrictions.</p>
Intentional Base on Balls	<p>HS: Pitches do not have to be thrown. Request can come from the coach or the catcher. Ball becomes dead.</p> <p>PRO: Pitches must be thrown. Ball remains live.</p>
Obstruction	<p>HS: Always a delayed dead ball.</p> <p>PRO: Delayed dead ball if a play is not being made on the obstructed runner. If a play is being made (e.g. run down) then the ball becomes dead.</p>
Re-Entry	<p>HS: One-time re-entry of starters is legal, as long as they return to the same batting slot. A substitute may not re-enter.</p> <p>PRO: Actual Pro baseball rules do not allow re-entry. Some summer leagues have similar rules to high school. Some have obscure rules regarding when a player may re-enter. Get this clarified at the pregame conference with coaches.</p>
Designated Hitter	<p>HS: A designated hitter (DH) may hit for any defensive player. This must be noted on the line-up card prior to the game.</p> <p>The DH and the player being DH'd for are "locked" into the same batting slot on the line-up card. Because of this, the line-up card should have both players listed in the same slot with the DH on top and noted.</p> <p>PRO: A DH may be used only for the pitcher. The pitcher is not locked into that batting position. Example: A coach wants the pitcher to hit for the first baseman. Legal. The status of the DH is terminated for the game. The player who is the DH may enter into any defensive position and will continue to bat in their batting position.</p>

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High School - Pro Baseball Rule Differences, Continued

Illegal Slide	<p>HS: An illegal slide is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rolling, cross-body, or pop-up slide into the fielder.• Runner's raised leg is higher than the fielder's knee when the fielder is in a standing position.• Runner goes beyond the base and makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder.• Runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg.• Runner tries to injure the fielder. <p>PRO: There is no specific penalty for actual Pro baseball. However, most summer leagues have rules similar to high school. Some Semi-Pro Leagues have a "gentleman's rule" regarding malicious contact at bases. Check with the coaches at the pre-game meeting.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> A player <i>does not</i> "have to slide" at any base, he must avoid contact or execute a legal slide. If he fails, call him out for interference, not for "not sliding."</p>
Fake Tags	<p>HS: Faking a tag is illegal and dangerous. Issue a warning the first time, unless it is malicious. The second time eject the offending player.</p> <p>⇒ <i>Obstruction rules apply if, in your judgment, the runner could have advanced to the next base.</i></p> <p>PRO: No rule. However, most summer leagues use the high school rule.</p>
Malicious Contact	<p>HS: Illegal. Eject player. If a runner maliciously slides—eject and out.</p> <p>PRO: No rule. Summer leagues may vary; see "Illegal Slide."</p>
Defensive Conferences	<p>HS: Three per seven-inning game to be used any time. One per extra inning with <i>no carry over</i>. No conference is charged if the pitcher is removed as pitcher.</p> <p>PRO: One per inning per pitcher. No conference is charged if the pitcher is removed as pitcher. Summer leagues vary; check with the coaches before the game.</p>
Offensive Conferences	<p>HS: One per inning for a coach or team personnel to confer with base runners, the batter, the on-deck batter or other offensive team personnel.</p> <p>⇒ <i>The umpire shall deny any subsequent offensive team requests for charged conferences.</i></p> <p>PRO: No rule. As many as they desire. Summer leagues vary; check with the coaches before the game.</p>
Balk	<p>HS: When the pitcher commits a balk, the ball becomes dead immediately. No further play can occur.</p> <p>PRO: A balk is a delayed dead ball. The ball becomes dead when the play is finished or when a thrown ball from a pitcher is caught.</p>

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High School - Pro Baseball Rule Differences, Continued

Finishing Game With Less Than 9 Players

HS: A team will be allowed to complete the game with eight players for any reason. A team may not go back to using nine players. An automatic out will be charged for the empty spot in the batting order. With less than eight players, the team will forfeit.

PRO: It is a forfeit if a team cannot continue with nine players. Summer leagues vary; check with the coaches before the game.

Allowable Movements From the Windup Position

HS: From the windup position the pitcher may only:

- Deliver a pitch, or
- Step backwards off the rubber with the pivot foot.

PRO: From the windup position the pitcher may:

- Deliver a pitch,
- Step towards a base and throw, or
- Step backwards off the rubber with the pivot foot.

BOTH: Once he steps backward with the pivot foot he becomes a “fielder” and may throw to a base or change to the set position. If the pitcher throws the ball out of play from the “fielder” position, runners will be awarded two bases from time of throw.

Appeals

HS: Defense may make a “live ball” appeal by tagging the base or runner while holding the ball.

If the ball is dead any *infielder or coach* may make a “verbal” appeal. They do not have to throw the ball to the base.

See Rulebook for more information

⇒ *Umpires must see the runner miss or leave early; don't guess or be talked into it by the opposing team.*

PRO: The appeal must be made while the ball is live.

If the ball is dead, the only way to get the ball alive is for:

- The pitcher to step on the rubber,
 - Batter in the box,
- and
- The umpire calls or signals “play ball.”

⇒ *Under Pro rules there cannot be an appeal play during a dead ball.*

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High School - Pro Baseball Rule Differences, Continued

Fielder Steps Into Dead Ball Territory After Catch **HS:** With less than two outs, all runners will be advanced one base from time-of-pitch if a fielder, after making a catch, *carries* the ball *with both feet* into dead-ball territory.

⇒ *The catch can be made with one foot in live ball territory and one in dead-ball territory.*

PRO: With less than two outs, all runners will be advanced one base from time-of-pitch if a fielder, after making a catch, *falls* into dead-ball territory. If the fielder is able to stay on his feet, the ball does not become dead and play continues.

⇒ *The catch can be made with one foot in live-ball territory and one in dead ball territory.*

Sliding Regulations **HS:** Runner shall execute a legal slide or avoid contact on a force or tag play.

PRO: No rule. Summer leagues may vary; check with the coaches before the game.

Interference On Double Play Attempt **HS:** If, in the umpire's judgment, a runner including the batter-runner *interferes in any way* and prevents a double play anywhere, two shall be declared out—the interferer and the other runner involved.

⇒ *See rule 8-4-2d for more information.*

PRO: If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner *willfully and deliberately* interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball becomes dead.

⇒ *The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-runner because of the action of his teammate.*

High School Softball - ASA Rule Differences

Introduction The following are the significant rule differences between High School (**HS**) and Amateur Softball Association (**ASA**).

Other differences are related to safety, philosophy, and ease of game administration.

Re-entry **HS:** Any starter or *substitute* that is removed from the game may re-enter once into the same batting slot.

Penalty: Illegal substitution:

Discovered on defense—Ejection of the player.

Discovered on offense—Out and ejection of the player. If at bat, she loses her turn at bat.

ASA: Any player that is removed from the game may re-enter once into the same batting slot.

Penalty: Violation of the re-entry rule results in the ejection of the illegal player.

Conferences **HS:** Three per seven-inning game. One per extra inning with no carry over. No conference is charged if the pitcher is removed as pitcher.

ASA: Same as high school. Except ASA calls them defensive conferences.

Jewelry **HS:** Absolutely no jewelry is allowed.

Penalty: Issue a team warning. Any subsequent offender on that team shall be restricted to the bench and the head coach restricted to the bench.

ASA: Exposed jewelry that is judged by the umpire to be dangerous may not be worn during the game.

Necklaces, religious medals, and ear posts are okay if not declared dangerous by the umpires.

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Pitching

HS: The following rules apply to pitchers:

- Must start with one foot on or partially on the rubber (this is the pivot-foot). The other foot can be in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate (this is the non-pivot foot). Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24" length of the pitcher's plate.
- While on the rubber the pitcher must take (or simulate) taking a sign from the catcher with hands separate. The ball can be in the pitching hand or glove.
- A step backwards with the non-pivot foot is allowed. The step backward shall begin before the hands come together. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together.
- The pivot-foot must remain in contact with the rubber at all times prior to the forward step.

ASA: The following rules apply to pitchers:

- Must start with both feet on the rubber.
- Both feet must remain in contact with the rubber at all times prior to the forward step.
- While on the rubber the pitcher must take (or simulate) taking a sign from the catcher with hands separate. The ball can be in the pitching hand or glove.
- A step backwards is not allowed, all motion must be forward. The pitcher may lean backwards prior to the pitch, but cannot step backwards.

BOTH: The pitcher may not leap. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may *push off and drag away* from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal.

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High School Softball - ASA Rule Differences, Continued

Look Back Rule

BOTH: When a runner is legitimately off the base after a pitched ball or as a result of a batter touching first base, the runner must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to the previous base once the pitcher has the ball within the 16-foot pitching circle.

While advancing or returning, if a runner reverses direction while the pitcher has the ball in the circle and no play is made on the runner, the runner will be declared out.

Once a runner has advanced or returned to a base, the runner will be declared out if she leaves said base, unless:

- A play is made on her or another runner.
- The pitcher does not have possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle.
- The pitcher releases the ball to the batter.
- The pitcher drops the ball.

A play by the pitcher is considered when the pitcher:

- Makes a throw from the pitcher's circle.
 - Carries the ball outside the circle. (Only one foot needs to be outside.)
 - Loses possession of the ball, including handing to or from another player inside or outside the pitcher's circle.
 - Makes a fake throw.
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- **HS:** The throwing arm is raised. No need for forward movement of the arm.
 - **ASA:** The throwing arm must be raised and actual movement forward must be made to constitute a fake throw. Just raising the arm is not constituted as making a fake throw.

Penalty: **BOTH:** The runner will be declared out for failing to return or advance immediately to a base.



