

2009 NFHS SOFTBALL RULES CHANGES

1-3-3	<p>Add to the softball specifications a requirement that the dynamic stiffness of softballs not exceed 7,500 lbs/inch when tested under current proposed ASTM test methods. Effective January 1, 2010.</p> <p>Rationale: This standard will better control softballs and should bring more consistency to the softball marketplace without lowering the current static compression of 375 lbs/inch. Static compression and dynamic stiffness are completely different measurements, so these numbers should not be compared. The additional specification makes NFHS softball consistent with ASA.</p>
2-8-2	<p>Change the definition of a bunt attempt to holding the bat in the strike zone and requiring the bat to be withdrawn in order to take a pitch.</p> <p>ART. 2...Attempted Bunt. <u>Any non-swinging movement of the bat intended to tap the ball into play. An attempted bunt (“offer”) is any movement of the bat toward the ball when the ball is over or near the plate area. The mere Holding of the bat in the strike zone is not considered an attempted bunt. In order to take a pitch, the bat must be withdrawn – pulled backward and away from the ball.</u></p> <p>Rationale: Changing the definition will make the bunt attempt easier for an umpire to determine and creates a better balance between offense and defense.</p>
6-1-4d and Note	<p>Change the pitching windup requirement to a maximum of one and a half clockwise revolutions.</p> <p>ART. 4...The pitcher may use any windup desired provided: d. the pitcher does not make more than one <u>and a half clockwise</u> revolutions of the arm in the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop the pitching arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be released the first time past the hip. NOTE: One revolution is interpreted as “not two revolutions,” provided the pitching arm is dropped to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion.</p> <p>Rationale: More and more pitchers are pushing the rule to the limit in an attempt to gain an advantage by deceiving the batter. The change will make an illegal pitch easier to identify and enforcement more consistent.</p>
6-2-3 Penalty	<p>Change the penalty for a pitcher exceeding the required 20-second time limit to a ball awarded to the batter – not an illegal pitch.</p> <p>Rationale: The change makes a violation of the time to pitch by the pitcher consistent with a batter failing to be ready within 10 seconds after the ball has been returned to the pitcher. An illegal pitch penalty is excessive as it also awards runners one additional base.</p>

2009 MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-4-2	<p>ART. 2 . . . Gloves/mitts may be a maximum of two colors unless judged by the umpire to be distracting. Glove lacing and manufacturer’s logo are not considered one of the two colors permitted. Glove lacing may be any color other than that of the ball. A glove/mitt worn by players that is entirely gray, white or optic in color is illegal. A gray, white or optic colored circle on the outside or inside of the glove/mitt that gives the appearance of a ball or is</p>
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	<p>judged to be distracting by the umpire is illegal. <u>One American flag (2 inch x 3 inch maximum) is permitted on the glove.</u></p> <p>Rational: More and more gloves have American flags as part of the glove design; the addition of the flag and the size restriction provides consistency with other apparel and equipment rules.</p>
1-7-1	<p>ART. 1 . . . The catcher shall wear a catcher's helmet and mask combination that meets the NOCSAE standard. The helmet shall bear the permanent NOCSAE seal. A throat protector that is part of or attached to the mask shall extend far enough to adequately protect the throat. An attached throat protector shall be commercially manufactured, properly attached, unaltered and worn properly. Plastic visors attached to the catcher's helmet are prohibited. <u>If an eye shield is worn attached to the catcher's helmet, it must be constructed of a molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100 percent (no tint) allowable light transmission.</u></p> <p>Rationale: This language was added last year to the batting helmets. This addition was recommended by the SMAC and provides consistency with other protective head gear.</p>
3-2-1	<p>ART. 1 . . . Uniforms of all team members should be of the same color and style. NOTE: <u>State associations may on an individual basis permit a player to participate while wearing a different style uniform for religious reasons.</u></p> <p>Rationale: The note is being added for clarification.</p>
3-2-7	<p>ART. 7...Exposed undergarments, if worn, are considered part of the official uniform. All exposed undergarments shall be <u>black, white, gray or a single solid school color</u> in either school colors or colors of black, white or gray.</p> <p>Rationale: Clarifies that exposed undergarments must be a solid color.</p>
6-2-3	<p>ART. 3...Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher <u>to prepare for the next pitch</u>, the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch.</p>
7-3-1	<p>ART. 1 . . . A batter shall not delay the game by failing to promptly take her position in the batter's box within 10 seconds <u>after the ball is returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch</u>, or by stepping out of the box when the pitcher is on the pitcher's plate. PENALTY: (Art. 1) If a pitcher is committed to delivering the pitch has brought the hands together, the batter leaves the box at the risk of having a strike called while being out of position. For failure of the batter to be ready within 10 seconds after the ball has been returned to the pitcher, the umpire shall call a strike. If it is the third strike, the umpire shall call time and declare the batter out.</p> <p>Rationale: Clarifies when the timeframe for delivering the next pitch or being in the batter's box begins. Further clarifies that a pitcher is committed to delivering the pitch when the hands are brought together.</p>

2009 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Pitching
2. Obstruction/Interference
3. DP/FLEX