Baseball Rules Changes - 2027

Mon Jul 13 2026

1-2-9: The Field

Change:

ART. 9 . . . Effective January 1, 2027, the double first base or a larger first base with the dimensions of 18 inches square will be required. The double first base shall be a white base and a contrasting solid color. The white portion of the base is located in fair territory, and the contrasting solid colored base shall be located in foul territory. The double first is split by the first base foul line. They shall be installed with no space between the two portions of the double first base. Second and third bases shall be white bags, 15 inches square. The larger first base will be white, 18 inches square and 2 to 5 inches in thickness, and made of canvas filled with a soft material, or molded rubber or synthetic material, and shall be securely attached to the ground or an anchor system as in Diagram 2. Bases may have tapered edges and /or be designed to disengage from their anchor systems.

Rationale: The double first base is intended to enhance player safety. The larger dimension bag has been in use at other levels of baseball with similar results with respect to player safety. Secondarily, the larger dimension first base can be implemented without additional rules interpretations, case plays or additional education for players, coaches, and umpires.

1-3-2d: Bats, Balls and Gloves

Change:

d. Bats that are not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. No BBCOR label, sticker or decal will be accepted on any non-wood bat. The certification mark shall be rectangle, a minimum of one inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color to read, "USA Baseball BBCOR or BBCOR .50". Effective January 1, 2028, there will be an additional class of permitted non-wood bats. Bats that are not made of a single piece of wood shall meet either the USA Baseball Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (USA Baseball BBCOR) BBCOR .50 or the USA Baseball Bat Performance Standard (-4, -5, -6) (USA Bat -4,-5,-6) and such bats shall be labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. No USA Baseball BBCOR or BBCOR .50 or USA Baseball (-4,-5,-6) label, sticker or decal will be accepted on any non-wood bat. For USA Baseball BBCOR, BBCOR .50 or USA Baseball (-4, -5, -6) the certification shall be rectangle, a minimum of one inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color to read, "USA Baseball BBCOR, BBCOR .50 or USA Baseball -4, USA Baseball -5, or USA Baseball -6".

Rationale: The NCAA has transferred management of the BBCOR .50 standard to USA Baseball. As a part of that transition, bats that meet the BBCOR .50 performance standard will feature an updated certification mark. Bats featuring the USA Baseball BBCOR mark are certified under the same testing protocols and are held to the same performance limit as the BBCOR .50 standard, including having a (-3) drop-weight/length ratio limit. Additionally, both the USA Baseball and NCAA bat performance tests are based on the Coefficient of Restitution from a bat-ball impact.

Regarding the USA Baseball (-4, -5, -6) Bat, the testing difference is necessary to address the various levels of play in the respective age groups. That said, the two standards establish similar performance limits for

bats. The performance of BBCOR and USA Baseball bats are nearly identical. The primary difference between bats is USA Baseball (-4, -5, -6) bats do not have the -3-drop weight to length restriction. The lighter USA Baseball bats are easier to swing (particularly for developing hitters); this can result in higher batting averages, but not higher hit ball speed. The lighter USA Baseball (-4, -5, -6) bats will produce slightly lower hit ball speeds than the BBCOR bats. Since USA Baseball bats perform nearly identically to BBCOR bats, we see no reason why BBCOR bats and USA bats could not be combined in play for leagues choosing this option. To maintain controls around drop weights for bats permitted in play, only USA Bats with drop weights of (-4, -5 or -6) and heavier will be permitted. USA Baseball has developed a modified USA Baseball certification mark to identify approved USA Bats that have drop-weights of (-4, -5 or -6). Rules ensuring players of comparable ability are on the field will lower the likelihood of an advanced hitter putting an inexperienced pitcher at risk.

1-5-12: Player Equipment

(NEW) ART. 12 . . . Eye shade (grease or no-glare strips or stickers) must be one solid stroke with no words, numbers, logos or other symbols within the eye shade and shall not extend further than the width of the eye socket or below the cheekbone.

Rationale: This is a universal rule adaptation by every NFHS Rules Committee to be uniformed for every applicable NFHS Sport Rule publication.

1-6-2: Player Communication Equipment

Change:

Articles 1 and 3 remain the same.

ART. 2 . . . One-way electronic communication devices are permissible from the dugout to the pitcher and/or catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. When using the electronic communication device, the coach cannot be outside the dugout/bench area.

Rationale: This proposed change to Rule 1-6-2 would permit the use of one-way electronic communication from the dugout to now include both the pitcher and/or catcher during play. The goal is to responsibly integrate technology in a way that enhances game management, improves communication, and supports student-athlete development. This change would be the next steppingstone into electronic communication being used further.

1-6-3: Player Communication Equipment

Change:

ART. 3 . . . No player shall wear any audio (microphone) or video (camera) device during the game. The use of electronic communication devices (e.g. amplifying devices, wireless communication devices, headphones, etc.) with players on the field is prohibited except for the one-way communication between the coach (in the dugout), pitcher and/or catcher.

NOTE:

1. Medical appliances and /or medical devices are not considered wearable technology.

2. State associations may also have policies in place to further address the use of electronic devices.

Rationale: No athlete participating in a game is permitted to wear any type of audio or video device to

record, transmit or live stream. This language aligns with other NFHS rules books. The use of electronic communication devices with players on the field is prohibited except the pitcher and/or catcher and coach. State associations may further restrict electronic devices.

3-3-1h: Bench and Field Conduct

Change:

ART. 1 . . . A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:

All articles (a-g, i-q) remain the same.

h. use an object in the coach's box other than a stopwatch, rules book (hard copy), scorebook, materials/ handheld electronic scoring devices;

Rationale: Expand the items available for use in the coach's box to record the score of the game.

4-2-2: Ending a Regulation Game

Change:

ART. 2 . . . The game ends when the team behind in score has completed its turn at bat in the seventh inning, or any inning thereafter if extra innings are necessary. If the home team scores a go-ahead run in the bottom of the seventh, or in any extra inning, the game is terminated at that point. Any game that is tied at the end of 4 ½ or at least five full innings when the game is called shall be a tie game, unless the state association has adopted a specific game ending procedure. A suggested tie-breaker option is:
During each half inning of the inning used to enforce the tiebreaker, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed at second base. For example, if the number five batter is to lead off, the number four batter in the batting order should be placed on second base. A substitute may be inserted for the runner. Batting and fielding…of times at bat.

Rationale: There has been an expressed interest that baseball has a tie-breaker option available for state association adoption.