

OFFICIAL SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES

adapted from the ASA Rule Book

RULE 1. DEFINITIONS

Sec. 1. ALTERED BAT

A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed. Examples of altering a bat are: replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type handle, inserting material inside the bat, applying excessive tape (more than two layers) to the bat grip, or painting a bat at the top or bottom for other than identification purposes. Replacing the grip with another legal grip is not considered altering the bat. A "flare or cone" grip attached to the bat is considered an altered bat.

Sec. 2. APPEAL PLAY

An appeal play is a play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a coach, co-coach, or pitcher. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the defensive team has left the field. The defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly left their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area. An official appeal play is as follows: The pitcher must present the ball to the umpire, step off the rubber and throw the ball to the designated spot. The umpire then makes his decision. If the umpire cannot rule on the appeal, it goes to the batter/baserunner.

Sec. 3. BASE ON BALLS

A base on balls permits a batter to gain first base without liability to be put out and is awarded to a batter by the umpire when four pitches are judged to be balls. The defensive pitcher does not have to pitch a strike, however, he is required to pitch four times before the batter can be awarded a base on balls.

Sec. 4. BASE PATH

A base path is an imaginary line three feet on either side of a direct line between the bases.

Sec. 5. BASERUNNER

A baserunner is a player of the team at bat who has finished his turn at bat, reached first base, and has not yet been put out.

Sec. 6. BATTED BALL

The batted ball is any ball that hits the bat or is hit by the bat and lands whether in fair or foul territory. No intention to hit the ball is necessary.

Sec. 7. BATTER'S BOX

The batter's box is the area to which the batter is restricted while in position with the intention of helping his team to obtain runs. The lines are considered as being within the batter's box. Prior to the pitch, the batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the batter's box. The umpire shall mark off the box with flour prior to the start of the game.

Sec. 8. BATTER-BASERUNNER

A batter-baserunner is a player who has finished his turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.

Sec. 9. BATTING ORDER

The batting order is the official listing of offensive players in the order in which members of that team must come to bat. When the lineup is submitted, it shall also include each player's position. Each team shall exchange batting orders prior to the start of the game.

- Sec. 10. **BLOCKED BALL**
A blocked ball is a batted or thrown ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or official playing area.
EFFECT - The ball is dead. For offensive equipment causing a blocked ball, the player being played on is out.
- Sec. 11. **BUNT**
A bunt is a legally tapped ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield. **BUNTING IS NOT PERMITTED.**
- Sec. 12. **CATCH**
A catch is a legally caught ball which occurs when the fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his hands or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hands or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he contacts the ball, collides with another player or wall, or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove he has complete control of the ball and that his release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball after reaching into his glove to remove the ball or while in the act of throwing the ball, it is a valid catch.
- Sec. 13. **CHOPPED BALL**
A chopped ball is one at which the batter strikes downward with a chopping motion of the bat so that the ball bounces high into the air. **NO CHOPPING IS PERMITTED.**
- Sec. 14. **COACH**
A coach is a member of the team at bat who takes his place on the field to direct the players of his team in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed. No gloves shall be held by the coaches.
- Sec. 15. **DEAD BALL**
The ball is not in play and is not considered in play again until the pitcher has the ball in his possession, is within eight feet of the pitcher's plate, and the plate umpire has called "play ball." A dead ball line is considered in play.
- Sec. 16. **DEFENSIVE TEAM**
The defensive team is the team in the field.
- Sec. 17. **DISLODGED BASE**
A dislodged base is a base removed from its proper position. (Applicable only to non-tied-down bases.)
- Sec. 18. **DOUBLE PLAY**
A double play is a play by the defense resulting in two offensive players being legally put out as a result of continuous action.
- Sec. 19. **FAIR BALL**
A fair ball is a batted ball that:
a. Settles or is touched on fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
b. Bounds past first or third base on or over fair territory.
c. While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
d. Touches first, second, or third base.
e. First falls on fair territory, beyond first or third base.
f. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.

Sec. 20. FAIR TERRITORY

Fair territory is that part of the playing field within and including the first and third base foul lines from home base to the bottom of the extreme playing field fence and perpendicularly upward.

Sec. 21. FIELDER

A fielder is any player of the team in the field.

Sec. 22. FLY BALL

A fly ball is any ball batted into the air.

Sec. 23. FORCE-OUT

A force-out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base he is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-baserunner, and before the batter-baserunner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out.

Sec. 24. FOUL BALL

A foul ball is a batted ball that:

- a. Settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- b. Bounds past first or third base over foul territory.
- c. While on or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- d. First falls on foul territory beyond first or third base.
- e. Touches the batter while the ball is within the batter's box.
- f. Hits the bat in the batter's hand while within the batter's box.

Sec. 25. FOUL TIP

A foul tip is a batted ball which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher.

NOTE: It is not a foul tip unless caught; and any foul tip that is caught, is a strike. The ball is dead. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball first touched the catcher's hand or glove.

Sec. 26. HOME TEAM

The home team is the team on whose grounds the game is played. The responsibilities of the home team include, as a minimum:

1. Providing a new game ball and tie-down bases for the field.
2. Initiating an opening and closing prayer at each game.
3. Reporting game results to the Commissioner within 48 hours after the game's conclusion.

Sec. 27. ILLEGAL BAT

An illegal bat is one that does not meet the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1.

Sec. 28. ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL

An illegally batted ball occurs when:

- a. A batter's entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when he hits a ball fair or foul.
- b. Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when he hits the ball.
- c. The batter hits the ball with an illegal bat. (See Rule 3, Section 1.)

Sec. 29. ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL

An illegally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his cap, mask, glove, or any part of his uniform that is detached from its proper place.

Sec. 30. IN FLIGHT

In flight describes any batted, thrown or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.

- Sec. 31. IN JEOPARDY
In jeopardy is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.
- Sec. 32. INFIELD
The infield is that portion of the field in fair territory which includes areas normally covered by infielders - "off-grass" or "inside diamond."
- Sec. 33. INFIELD FLY
An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second or first, second, and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder who positions himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purposes of this rule.
NOTE: When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "INFIELD FLY - THE BATTER IS OUT" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire shall declare "INFIELD FLY - THE BATTER IS OUT IF FAIR."
The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught or retouched and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the foul lines and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.
- Sec. 34. INNING
An inning is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three outs or six runs have scored for each team. A new inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning or at the end of play after six runs have scored.
NOTE: The six run rule does not apply after the sixth inning.
- Sec. 35. INTERFERENCE
Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member which impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.
- Sec. 36. LEGAL TOUCH
A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-baserunner who is not touching a base is touched by the ball while the ball is securely held in a fielder's hand. The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched with hand or glove which holds the ball.
- Sec. 37. LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL
A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided it is not caught in the fielder's hat, cap, mask, protector, pocket or other part of his uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with a hand or hands.
- Sec. 38. LINE DRIVE
A line drive is a fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.
- Sec. 39. OBSTRUCTION
Obstruction is the act of:
a. A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
b. A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, or about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a baserunner who is legally running bases.

- Sec. 40. OFFENSIVE TEAM
The offensive team is the team at bat.
- Sec. 41. OUTFIELD
The outfield is that portion of the field which is outside the diamond formed by the baselines or the area not normally covered by an infielder and within the foul lines beyond first and third bases and boundaries of the grounds.
- Sec. 42. OVERSLIDE
An overslide is the act of an offensive player when, as a baserunner, he overslides a base he is attempting to reach. It is usually caused when his momentum causes him to lose contact with the base which then causes him to be in jeopardy. The batter-baserunner may overslide first base without being in jeopardy if he immediately return to that base.
- Sec. 43. OVERTHROW
An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another to retire a runner who has not reached or is off base, and which goes into foul territory beyond the boundary lines (i.e. fence) of the playing field.
- Sec. 44. PLAY BALL
"Play ball" is the term used by the plate umpire to indicate that the play shall begin or be resumed when the pitcher has the ball in his possession and is within eight feet of the pitcher's plate. All defensive players, except the catcher who must be behind the plate, must be anywhere in fair ground to put the ball in play.
- Sec. 45. QUICK RETURN PITCH
A quick return pitch is one made by the pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes his desired position in the batter's box or while he is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch. The quick return pitch is NOT VALID.
- Sec. 46. ROSTER
The roster is the current list of those players who are permitted to play on only that one team during all League games.
- Sec. 47. RUNNER
The term "runner" means "batter-runner or baserunner."
- Sec. 48. SACRIFICE FLY
A sacrifice fly is scored when, with less than two outs, the batter scores a runner with a fly ball which is caught.
- Sec. 49. SLIDING
Sliding is permitted, but is not mandatory; however, stand up contact must be avoid. *ed*
- Sec. 50. STEALING
Stealing is the act of a baserunner attempting to advance during a pitch to the batter. STEALING IS NOT ALLOWED.
- Sec. 51. STRIKE ZONE
The strike zone is the area including home plate and the mat.
- Sec. 52. TIME
"Time" is the term used by the umpire to order the suspension of play.
- Sec. 53. TRIPLE PLAY
A triple play is a continuous action play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out.
- Sec. 54. TURN AT BAT
A turn at bat begins when a player first enters the batter's box and continues until he is put out or becomes a baserunner.

RULE 2. THE PLAYING FIELD

Sec. 1. THE BATTER'S BOX

The batter's box, one on each side of home plate, shall measure three feet by seven feet. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be six inches from home plate. The front line of the box shall be four feet in front of a line drawn through the center of home plate. The lines are considered as being within the batter's box.

Sec. 2. THE COACH'S BOX

The coach's box is behind a line 15 feet long drawn outside the diamond. The line is parallel to and eight feet from the first and third baselines, extended from the bases toward home plate.

RULE 3. EQUIPMENT

Sec. 1. THE OFFICIAL BAT

- a. Shall be marked "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" by the manufacturer.
- b. Must be taped 18 inches.

Sec. 2. SHOES

Shoes must be worn by all players. The soles may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber cleats. Shoes with any metal spikes are illegal.

Sec. 3. SOFTBALLS

Only League purchased softballs are to be used in League games. A new ball, provided by the home team, is to be used for each game. If a second ball is needed, a previously used ball may be used.

Sec. 4. BASES

The home team shall provide tie-down bases for each League game.

RULE 4. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

Sec. 1. THE TEAM

- a. The defensive team shall consist of ten players. At least three of these players must be female.
- b. A team must have at least seven players including three females to start/continue a game. (Exceptions, see Rule 4, Section 3)
- c. No player is permitted to play on more than one existing League team.

Sec. 2. ROSTERS

The coach of each team is required to submit in writing a roster to the commissioner prior to the start of the League's pre-season games. Such a roster will contain the following information about each player: Name, sex, home phone number, parish affiliation, previous year's league participation. At least 50% of the people on the roster must be affiliated with the parish to which the team belongs, and at least 75% of the people on the roster must be Catholic. The commissioner reserves the right to verify the accuracy of any information contained on the roster.

Once submitted to the Commissioner, roster changes can occur at any time, however, any players added on after the cutoff date, while they can play in the regular season game, will not be able to play in the playoff games. A 48-hour advance notification to the Commissioner is required for any roster additions or deletions*. If, after the cutoff date, a team falls below the required seven players (including three females) or has less than three females, the Commissioner will supply that team with the players necessary to reach the minimum.

*for that Sunday's game.

Sec. 3. PLAYER'S POSITIONS

Player's positions shall be designated as pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, shortstop, short fielder (rover), left fielder, center fielder, and right fielder.

NOTE: Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be behind home plate, and the pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch, or within eight feet of the pitcher's plate when putting the ball in play for an appeal play. The short fielder (rover) may play anywhere. The three other outfielders must be off the infield.

Sec. 4. INJURED PLAYERS

a. Injured batter(s), those who possess a previously-known ailment/injury that prevents them from their normal base-running, must be announced to the opposing captain prior to the start of the game. All such batter(s) must successfully get to first base. Their designated baserunner must be of the same sex and must also be the last such person to have gotten out immediately preceding (in the current or preceding inning) the affected batter.

b. An injured player (i.e., a player who sustains an injury during the game) must be completely removed from the remainder of that game and his position in the batting line-up is an out and is "skipped over" for the rest of the game if that injured player cannot fulfill his first "at bat" after the injury occurred. If removal of such an injured player, upon removal from the line-up, results in the team having less than three remaining females, that team shall play shorthanded.

NOTE: Except as described above, no designated hitters or designated baserunners shall be permitted.

Sec. 5. PLAYERS LEAVING EARLY

Any player knowingly having to leave a game before its pre-determined conclusion, will have his coach inform the opposing team's coach of that fact (and the specific time of departure) before the start of that game. If this player's departure does not force his team to forfeit that game (see Rule 4, Section 1b), and this "advance notification of departure" is adhered to, then that person's batting position if merely "skipped over" after his departure for the remainder of that game with no team penalty. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in that team's accepting an "out" only on the first occurrence of the departing person's batting position.

Sec. 6. EJECTION OF PLAYERS

Any player who does not heed a previous umpire warning to his coach shall be ejected from the game and MUST LEAVE THE PARK.

RULE 5. THE GAME

Sec. 1. REGULAR SEASON AND POST SEASON GAMES

a. Regular season games shall be seven innings or 90 minutes, whichever occurs first. All games must end on a complete inning unless the home team is ahead at the end of the half-inning.

b. All Post Season games will be a full seven innings.

c. Any game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued by playing additional innings* until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made. If, however, extending such a game in order to break a tie forces that game to overlap into an immediately following game, then that game will be over after the completed inning, less than ten minutes into the second game. This applies only to regular season games.

*up to two (2) innings

- d. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if five or more complete innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in four or more innings than the other team has scored in five or more innings. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or other causes which places the patrons or players in peril.
- e. These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of players or spectators which might call for forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked verbally or physically by any team member or spectator.
- f. A forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases:
 - 1. If a team fails to appear on the field or, being on the field, refuses to begin a game for which it is scheduled or assigned at the time scheduled or within ten minutes thereafter.
 - 2. If after the game has begun, one side refuses to continue to play, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
 - 3. If, after play has been suspended by the umpire, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "play ball."
 - 4. If a team employs tactics noticeably designed to delay or to hasten the game.
 - 5. If, after a warning by the umpire to the coach, any one of the rules of the game is willfully violated.
 - 6. If the order for the removal of a player is not obeyed within one minute.
 - 7. If because of the removal of players from the game by the umpire or for any cause except injury, there are less than seven players including three females on either team.
- g. Games that are not considered regulation shall be replayed from the beginning. Original lineups may be changed when the game is replayed.
- h. Any rainout game shall be replayed from the beginning unless four and one-half innings have been played.
- i. Any changes in the League Schedule must be approved by the Commissioner ONE week in advance.
- j. The winner of the game shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game.
 - 1. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last complete inning, unless the team second at bat has scored more runs than the first team at bat in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.
 - 2. The score of a forfeited game shall be 9-0 in favor of the team not at fault.
- k. All players must play at least two full innings and neither inning can be the seventh inning.

Sec. 2. BATTING LINEUPS

Prior to the start of the game both team captains (or their designees) will exchange their batting lineups. These lineups will include all those players who are interested and able to play that game. Once established, these lineups CANNOT be changed, except due to injury (see Rule 4, Section 4) or a player having to leave early (see Rule 4, Section 5). Players arriving late will be placed at the very bottom of that team's lineup and such players will be announced to the opposing team prior to the start of the game. Any player arriving after the third inning will not be allowed to play. Under no circumstances will one player be substituted for another at any time in a team's batting line-up.

Sec. 3. SCORING RUNS

- a. One run shall be scored each time a baserunner legally touches first, second, third bases, and home plate before the third out of the inning.
- b. A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:

1. The batter being put out before legally touching first base.
 2. A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
 3. A baserunner leaving base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- c. No succeeding runner shall score a run when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.
 - d. A baserunner shall not score a run ahead of the baserunner preceding him in the batting order, if the preceding runner has not been put out.

Sec. 4. RE-SCHEDULED GAMES

Any game that must be resumed (due to either an upheld protest) or replayed (due to a rainout in which Section 1d. is not satisfied, or due to sudden circumstances that were approved by the Commissioner at least one week in advance), will be rescheduled for the closest available rain-out date thereafter, unless both coaches can agree on an alternate date before one week has expired since the incomplete game in question.

Sec. 5. POST SEASON GAMES

- a. All League Post Season games shall comply with all of these League Rules, in accordance with its released playoff schedule.
- b. The home team in all post season games is that team with the better record.
- c. Tie-breakers will be used, if necessary, to determine Division standings:
 1. Better record in head-to-head competition (applicable to the two teams only); if the same, then:
 2. Better record in intra-division competition; if the same, then:
 3. Greater in total (offensive) scoring for season; if the same, then:
 4. The Commissioner will use a coin flip to break same records.
- d. League's All-Star Game shall consist of four people (at least one of which is female, and not more than one from last year's All-Star team) voted from each team. Coaches from the Division winning teams will coach respective All-Star teams.

RULE 6. PITCHING REGULATIONS

Sec. 1. PITCHING POSITION

- a. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and with one or both feet in contact with, but not off the side of, the pitcher's plate.
- b. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must come to a full and complete stop facing the batter, with the shoulders in line with first and third bases, and with the ball held in the pitching hand or both hands in front of the body.
- c. The pitcher shall not be considered in pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- d. The pitcher's windup must start with both feet on the pitcher's plate, and until releasing the ball the pitcher must have one foot on the plate.

Sec. 2. THE PITCH

- a. A legal delivery shall be a ball which is delivered to the batter with an underhanded motion.
- b. The pitch shall be released at a moderate speed. The speed is left entirely up to the umpire. The umpire shall warn the pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the pitcher repeats such an act after being warned, he shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game.
- c. The hand shall be below the hip.
- d. The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc, and reach a height of at least six feet from the ground while not exceeding a maximum height of twelve feet from the ground.

- e. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strikeout or a putout made by the catcher.

Sec. 3. THE WINDUP

The pitcher may use any windup desired, providing:

- a. He does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b. His windup is a continuous motion.
- c. He does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the pitching motion.
- d. He delivers the ball toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- e. He does not continue to wind up after he releases the ball.
- f. He does not pitch the ball behind his back or between his legs.

Sec. 4. THE PITCHER

- a. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball while in the pitching position in order to prevent the batter from striking it.
- b. The pitcher shall not, at any time during the game, be allowed to use tape or any other foreign substances upon the ball, the pitching hand or fingers, nor shall any other player apply a foreign substance to the ball.
- c. The pitcher shall not wear a sweatband, bracelet, or similar type item on the wrist or forearm of the pitching arm.
- d. At the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time. For excessive warm-up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of five.
- e. The pitcher shall not attempt a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken his position or is off balance as a result of a previous pitch.

NOTE: It is an illegal pitch if a fielder takes up a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, acts in a manner to distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be released.

EFFECT: Any infraction of Sections 1-4 is an illegal pitch. A ball shall be called on the batter.

EXCEPTION: If a batter strikes at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such an illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by the batter. If an illegal pitch is called during an appeal play, the appeal is cancelled.

NOTE: An illegal pitch shall be called immediately when it becomes illegal. If called by the plate umpire, it shall be called in a voice so that the catcher and batter will hear it. The plate umpire will also give the delayed dead ball signal. If called by the base umpire, it shall be called so that the nearest fielder shall hear it. The base umpire shall also give the delayed dead ball signal. Failure of players to hear the call shall not void the call.

Sec. 5. NO PITCH SHALL BE DECLARED WHEN:

- a. The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b. The runner is called out for leaving the base before the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- c. The pitcher pitches before the baserunner has retouched his base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.
- d. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his windup or during the backswing.

EFFECT - Sec. 5a-d: The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is cancelled.

- e. No player, coach, or spectators shall call "Time," employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

EFFECT - Sec. 5e: No pitch shall be declared and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type of act by the team warned shall result in the offender being removed from the game.

RULE 7. BATTING

Sec. 1. THE BATTER

The batter shall take his position within the lines of the batter's box.

- a. The batter shall not have his entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- b. The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other batter's box while the pitcher is in position, ready to pitch.
- c. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal or altered bat.

EFFECT - Sec. 1a-c: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.

- d. The batter must have both feet completely within the lines of the batter's box prior to the start of the pitch. He may touch the lines, but no part of his foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

Sec. 2. EACH PLAYER OF THE SIDE AT BAT SHALL BECOME A BATTER IN THE ORDER IN WHICH HIS NAME APPEARS ON THE SCORESHEET.

- a. The batting order of each team must be exchanged by the teams prior to the start of the game.
- b. The batting order must be followed throughout the game. Absolutely no batting substitutions are permitted. Injured players or players who have left early are skipped over, provided that Rule 4, Section 4 and 5, respectively, are not violated.
- c. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

EFFECT - Sec. 1b-c: Batting out of order is an appeal play which may be initiated by the coach, co-coach, or pitcher of the defensive team only. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when all infielders (including the pitcher) have left their normal positions (crossed the foul line).

1. If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take his place and legally assume any balls and strikes. Any runs scored or bases run while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.
2. If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed his turn at bat and before there has been a pitch to another batter, the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, or a hit batter shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the player been put out by ordinary play.
3. If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal, and the next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in regular order.

- d. When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed his turn at bat, he shall be the first batter in the next inning, and the ball and strike count on him shall be cancelled.

Sec. 3. INTERFERENCE

- a. The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box or intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter's box.

EFFECT - Sec. 3a: The ball is dead and baserunners must return to the last base that, in the judgement of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference. The batter is out.

- b. Members of the team at bat shall not interfere with a player attempting to field a foul fly ball.

EFFECT - Sec. 3b: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch.

- c. The batter shall not hit a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.

NOTE: If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgement, there was not intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.

EFFECT - Sec. 3c: The ball is dead, and the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.

Sec. 4. A STRIKE

A strike is called by the umpire:

- a. For each legally pitched ball touching either home plate or the mat and at which the batter does not swing.

EFFECT - Sec. 4a: The ball is live.

- b. For each pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.

EFFECT - Sec. 4b: The ball is live.

- c. For each foul tip held by the catcher.

EFFECT - Sec. 4c: The batter is out if it is the third strike. The ball is live on any strike.

- d. For each foul ball not legally caught except the third strike, unless it was the second foul ball after the second strike.

- e. For each pitched ball struck at and missed which touches any part of the batter.

- f. When any part of the batter's person is hit with his own batted ball when he is in the batter's box and he has less than two strikes.

- g. When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter before touching the strike zone.

EFFECT - Sec. 4d-g: The ball is dead and baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.

Sec. 5. A BALL

A ball is called by the umpire:

- a. For each pitched ball not struck at by the batter, which does not touch the strike zone or touches the ground before reaching home plate.

EFFECT - Ball is only dead if it lands in front of the plate.

- b. For each illegally pitched ball.

EXCEPTION: If the batter swings at the illegal pitch, the illegal pitch is ignored.

- c. When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter outside of the strike zone.

- d. When the pitcher fails to pitch the ball within 30 seconds.

- e. For each excessive warm-up pitch.

Sec. 6. A FAIR BALL

A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles or is touched on fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.

- b. Bounds past first or third base on or over fair territory.

- c. While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.

- d. Touches first, second, or third base.

- e. First falls on fair territory beyond first or third base.
EFFECT - Sec. 6a-e: The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.
- f. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
NOTE: If the ball hits the foul line pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.

Sec. 7. A FOUL BALL

A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- b. Bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory.
- c. While on or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or umpire or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- d. First falls on foul territory beyond first or third base.
- e. Touches the batter while the ball is within the batter's box.

EFFECT - Sec. 7a-f:

- 1. The ball is dead unless it is a legally caught foul fly. If a foul fly is caught, the batter is out.
- 2. A strike is called on the batter for each fouled ball not legally caught, except the third strike. The batter is out upon hitting his second foul ball after his second strike.
- 3. Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out, unless a foul fly is caught. In this case, the baserunner may advance with liability to be put out after the ball has been touched.

Sec. 8. A FOUL TIP

A foul tip is a batted ball which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher.

NOTE: It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike.

EFFECT - Sec. 8: A strike is called, the ball is dead.

Sec. 9. THE BATTER IS OUT:

- a. When the third strike is struck at, missed and touches any part of the batter's person.
- b. When a batter appears in the batter's box with or is discovered using an altered or illegal bat.
- c. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- d. Immediately when he hits an infield fly, as declared by the umpire, with runners on first and second or on first, second, and third with less than two outs. This is called the Infield Fly Rule. (See Rule 1, Section 32).
- e. If a preceding runner who is not yet out, in the umpire's judgement, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or throw a ball in an attempt to complete the play. The runner shall also be called out and interference called.
- f. When a third strike is called or after the second foul ball after the second strike.
- g. When he bunts or chops the ball downward.

Sec. 10. THE ON-DECK BATTER

- a. The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.
- b. When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.

RULE 8. BASERUNNING

- Sec. 1. THE BASERUNNERS MUST TOUCH BASES IN LEGAL ORDER (i.e. FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND HOME PLATE).
- a. When a baserunner must return to bases while the ball is in play, he must touch the bases in reverse order.
EFFECT - Sec. 1a: The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.
 - b. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he is entitled to hold the base until he has legally touched the next base in order, or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding baserunner.
 - c. When a baserunner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position.
EFFECT - Sec. 1b-c: The ball is in play and baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.
 - d. A baserunner shall not run bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
EFFECT - Sec. 1d: The ball is dead and the baserunner is out.
 - e. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
EFFECT - Sec. 1e: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it. The other baserunner may be put out by being touched with the ball.
 - f. Failure of preceding runner to touch a base or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a succeeding baserunner who touches bases in proper order. However, if the failure to touch a base in regular order or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball is the third out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
 - g. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one he had left illegally after the following runner has scored.
 - h. After the ball becomes dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base he has left after he has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base, or a base he has left illegally, even after the ball becomes alive.
 - i. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one he had left illegally once he enters his team dugout or bench area.
 - j. When a walk is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order.
 - k. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched prior to advancing to awarded bases.
 - l. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.
- Sec. 2. THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-BASERUNNER
- a. As soon as he hits a fair ball.
 - b. When four balls have been called by the umpire.
EFFECT - Sec. 2b: The ball is dead. Baserunners may not advance unless forced. If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, he must pitch four balls.
 - c. When the catcher obstructs or any other fielder interferes with or prevents him from striking at a pitched ball.
EFFECT - Sec. 2c: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base. Baserunners may not advance unless forced.
 1. The umpire shall give a "delayed dead ball signal."
 2. The manager of the batting team has the option of taking the award for "catcher obstruction" as described above, or he may take the result of the play.
 3. If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is cancelled. All actions as a result of the batted ball stand. No option is given.
 - d. When a fair ball strikes the person or clothing of the umpire or a baserunner on fair ground.
EFFECT - Sec. 2d:
 1. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner after passing an infielder, other than the pitcher, or touches an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

2. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead; the baserunner is out; and the batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out. Baserunners not forced by the batter- baserunner must return.

Sec. 3. BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITH LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:

- a. When the ball is thrown into fair or foul territory and is not blocked.
- b. When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- c. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- d. If a fair ball strikes the umpire or a baserunner after having passed an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball shall be considered in play.

EFFECT - Sec. 3a-d: The ball is alive and in play.

Sec. 4. A PLAYER FORFEITS HIS EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:

- a. If, while the ball is in play, he fails to touch the base to which he was entitled before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-baserunner at first base or any other baserunner forced to advance because the batter became a baserunner, this out is a force-out.
- b. If, after dislodging the base, the batter-baserunner attempts to continue to the next base.
- c. If, after overrunning first base, the batter-baserunner attempts to continue to second base.

Sec. 5. BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:

- a. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.

EFFECT - Sec. 5a: The ball is dead.

- b. When a fielder obstructs the baserunner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball, has the ball ready to touch the baserunner, or is about to receive a thrown ball.

EFFECT - Sec. 5b: When obstruction occurs, the umpire will call and signal obstruction.

1. If a play is being made on the obstructed runner before he touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgement, if there had been no obstruction.

EXCEPTION: A baserunner obstructed in a rundown shall be awarded one base beyond the base last touched at the time of the obstruction regardless of the direction of the runner. Any preceding runners forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction shall advance without liability to be put out.

2. If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the next play is completed. The umpire will then call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, that will nullify the act of obstruction. If, in the judgement of the umpire, the obstructed runner a) would have reached the base he was played on, he will be awarded that base; b) is put out prior to reaching the next base after the obstruction, and in the judgement of the umpire, he would not have reached that base, the runner is returned to the last base touched at the time of obstruction; or c) goes beyond the base that he would have reached had he not been obstructed, the runner runs at his own risk and may be put out.
3. When a runner is obstructed while advancing or returned to a base by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted ball, or a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached, in his judgement, had there been no obstruction.

NOTE: A player may be removed from the game if the umpire feels there is justification.

c. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base.

1. For being obstructed by the catcher when striking at a pitched ball.

EFFECT - Sec. 5c 1: The ball is dead and baserunners may not advance farther than the base to which they are entitled.

d. When a fielder contacts or catches a fair batted or thrown ball with his cap, mask, glove or any part of his uniform while it is detached from its proper place on his person.

EFFECT - Sec. 5d: The baserunners would be entitled to three bases if it is a batted ball or two bases if a thrown ball; and in either case, the baserunners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair hit ball which, in the judgement of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, the runner shall be awarded a home run.

e. When a ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.

EFFECT - Sec. 5e: Awarded bases will be determined by the position of the baserunner at the time of the infraction. The ball is dead. In all cases where a thrown ball goes into a stand for spectators; goes over, through, or under any fence surrounding the playing field; hits any person or object not engaged in the game; goes into the player's benches, including bats lying near such benches, whether the ball rebounds onto the playing field or not; or remains in the meshes of any wire screen protecting the spectators, each and every baserunner will be awarded two bases.

1. When the first throw is made by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding the two bases, will be governed by the position of each runner at the time the ball was delivered by the pitcher.

NOTE: If all runners, including the batter-baserunner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award will be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

2. When a throw is made by an outfielder or is the result of any succeeding play or attempted play, the two bases award will be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he has touched at the time the final throw was made. If two runners are between the same base, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

f. When a fair batted fly ball goes over the fence or into the stands, it shall entitle the batter to a home run. The batter must touch the bases in regular order.

g. When a fair ball bounds or rolls into a stand; over, under, or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player or other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.

EFFECT - Sec. 5g: The ball is dead and all baserunners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

h. 1. When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the "fielder" enters dead ball territory.

2. If, in the judgement of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time he entered dead ball territory.

NOTE: A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have unintentionally carried it there. A dead ball line is considered in play.

Sec. 6. A BASERUNNER MUST RETURN TO HIS BASE:

a. When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.

- b. When an illegally batted ball is declared by the umpire.
- c. When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference. Other baserunners shall return to the last base which was, in the judgement of the umpire, legally touched by him at the time of the interference.
- d. When any part of the batter's person is touched by a pitched ball that is swung at and missed.
- e. When a batter is hit by a pitched ball, unless forced.
- f. When a foul ball is not caught.

EFFECT - Sec. 6a-f:

- 1. The ball is dead.
- 2. The baserunner must return to base without liability to be put out, except when forced to go to the next base because the batter became a baserunner.
- 3. No runs shall score unless all bases are occupied.
- 4. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning to base, but must return promptly; however, they must be allowed sufficient time to return.
- g. Base stealing. Under no condition is a runner permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted. The runner must return to his base.

EFFECT - Sec. 6g: Baserunners may leave their bases when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, but must return to that base immediately after each pitch not hit by the batter.

- h. When a caught fair fly ball, including a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped with less than two outs and a runner on first base, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases.

Sec. 7. BATTER-BASERUNNER IS OUT:

- a. When, after a fair ball is hit, he is legally touched with the ball before he touches first base.
- b. When, after a fair ball is hit, the ball is held by a fielder touching first base with any part of his person before the batter-baserunner touches first base.
- c. When, after a fly ball is hit, the ball is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d. When, after a fair ball is hit or a base on balls is issued, he fails to advance to first base and enters his team area.

EFFECT - Sec. 7a-d: The ball is in play and the batter-baserunner is out.

- e. When he runs outside the three-foot line and, in the judgement of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base. However, he may run outside the three-foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- f. When he interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate shall also be called out.
- g. When a batter-baserunner interferes with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate. The runner is also out.
- h. When he moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
- i. When he is discovered using an altered or illegal bat.

EFFECT - Sec. 7e-i: The ball is dead and the batter-baserunner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of or before the illegal action.

Sec. 8. THE BASERUNNER IS OUT:

- a. When, in running to any base, he runs more than three feet from a direct line between that base and the next one in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder.
- b. When, while the ball is in play, he is legally touched with the ball in the hand of the fielder while not in contact with a base.

- c. When, on a force-out, a fielder tags him with the ball or holds the ball on the base to which the baserunner is forced to advance before the runner reaches the base.
- d. When the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e. When a baserunner physically passes a preceding baserunner before that runner has been put out.

EFFECT - Sec. 8a-e: The ball is in play and the baserunner is out.

- f. When the baserunner leaves his base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has touched a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base, or a fielder legally touches the baserunner before the baserunner returns to his base.
- g. When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is in play and legally held on that base; or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base he missed.
- h. When the batter-baserunner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is legally touched while off base.
- i. In running or sliding for home plate, he fails to touch home plate and makes no attempts to return to the base when the pitcher holds the ball in his hand and appeals to the umpire for the decision.

EFFECT - Sec. f-i:

- 1. These are appeal plays and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next legal or illegal pitch.
- 2. The ball is in play and the baserunner is out.

NOTE: On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the defensive team has left the field. The defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly left their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area.

- 3. Once the ball has been returned to the infield and time has been called, only the coach, co-coach, or pitcher with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon. The pitcher then presents the ball to the umpire, steps off the rubber, and throws the ball to the designated spot. The umpire should acknowledge the appeal, and should then make a decision on the play. Baserunners cannot leave their base during this period, as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

NOTE: a) If the pitcher has possession of the ball and is in contact with the pitching plate when making a verbal appeal, no illegal pitch is called.

- b) If the umpire has indicated "play ball" and the pitcher now requests an appeal, the umpire would again call "time out" and allow the appeal process.

- j. When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
- k. When a baserunner is struck with a fair batted ball in fair territory while off base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- 1. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which an infielder has missed.
- m. When, with a baserunner on third base, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than two outs.
- n. When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play. On a batted ball, if the runner is assisted prior to the batted ball being caught or not caught, regardless of whether the ball is fair or foul, the ball is dead immediately, the runner out, and no pitch is declared.

- o. When the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball and, thereby draws a throw to home plate. The baserunner nearest to third base shall be declared out.
 - p. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play.
 - q. When the baserunner runs the bases in reverse order to confuse the defensive team, or to make a farce out of the game.
 - r. If a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
 - s. When a runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall also be declared out.
- EFFECT - Sec. 8j-s: The ball is dead and the baserunner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of or before the illegal action.
- t. When a defensive players has the ball or is about to receive the ball and the runner remains on his feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is to be declared out.
- EFFECT - Sec. 8t: The runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision, unless Rule 8, Section 8j or Rule 8, Section 8s applies.
- u. When the baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which he is entitled until the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- EFFECT - Sec. 8u: The ball is dead, "NO PITCH" is declared and the baserunner is out.
- v. When he abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and enters the team area or leaves the field of play. The baserunner shall be declared out immediately when he enters the team area or leaves the field of play.

Sec. 9. BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT:

- a. When a baserunner runs behind or in front of the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
- b. When a baserunner does not run in a direct line to the base, providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in his possession.
- c. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the baserunner comes in contact with the one who, in the judgement of the umpire, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d. When a baserunner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgement of the umpire no other infielder HAS A CHANCE TO MAKE AN OUT.
- e. When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- f. When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- g. When a batter-baserunner overruns first base after touching it and returns directly to the base.
- h. When the baserunner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he will not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball. No pitch will be called by the umpire (See Rule 6, Section 5b).
- i. When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate nor by stepping on the plate with the ball in his possession.
- j. When a baserunner holds his base until a fly ball touches a fielder, then attempts to advance.
- k. When hit by a batted ball when touching his base, unless he intentionally interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play.
- l. When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position. The base is considered to have followed the runner.

- EFFECT - Sec. 91: A baserunner reaching a base safely will not be out for being off that base. He may return to that base without liability to be put out when the base has been replaced. A runner forfeits this exemption if he attempts to advance beyond the dislodged base before it is again in proper position.
- m. When the baserunner is hit by a fair batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

RULE 9. DEAD BALL - BALL IN PLAY

Sec. 1. THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY:

- a. When the ball is batted illegally.
- b. When the batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c. When a ball is pitched illegally.
EXCEPTION - Sec. 1c: If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, the play stands and the pitch is no longer illegal.
- d. When "NO PITCH" is declared.
- e. When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing, whether the ball is struck at or not.
- f. When a foul ball is not caught.
- g. When a baserunner is called out for leaving the base too soon on a pitched ball.
- h. When the offensive team causes the interference.
 1. When a batter intentionally strikes the ball a second time, strikes it with a thrown bat, or deflects its course in any way while running to first base.
 2. When a thrown ball is intentionally touched by a coach or on-deck batter.
 3. When a fair ball strikes a baserunner or umpire before touching an infielder, including the pitcher, or before passing an infielder, other than the pitcher.
 4. When the batter interferes with the catcher.
 5. When a member of the offensive team intentionally interferes with a live ball.
 6. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which a fielder has missed.
- i. When the ball is outside the established playing limits of the playing area. A ball is considered "outside the playing field" when it touches the ground, person on the ground, or object outside the playing area.
- j. If an accident to a runner prevents him from proceeding to a base which he is awarded. A substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player. (The substitute runner must be of the same sex as the person he is replacing, and must also be the last such person to have gotten out.)
- k. In case of interference with batter or fielder.
- l. When the batter bunts or chops the pitched ball.
- m. When time is called by the umpire.
- n. When any part of the batter's person is hit with his own batted ball when he is in the batter's box.
- o. When a baserunner runs bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
- p. When the batter is hit by a pitched ball.
- q. When, in the judgement of the umpire, the coach touches or physically helps the runner to return to or leave a base; or when the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line while the fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.
- r. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making a play.
- s. When a baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which he is entitled until a legally pitched ball has left the pitcher's hand.

ww to home

- t. When a play is being made on an obstructed runner or if the batter-baserunner is obstructed before he touches first base.
- u. After each strike or ball.
- v. When the catcher obstructs the batter's attempt to hit a pitch.
EXCEPTION - Sec. 1v: The ball remains alive if the batter reaches first base safely and all other runners have advanced at least one base.
- w. When a blocked ball is declared.
- x. When a batter enters the batter's box with or uses an altered or illegal bat.
- y. When a caught fly ball, including a line drive, which can be handled by an infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped with less than two outs and a runner on first base, first and second, first and third, or first, second, and third bases.
- z. When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
EFFECT - Sec. 1a-z: The batter or baserunners may not advance on a dead ball unless awarded a base or bases by rule.
- aa. When time has been called and an appeal is being made by the defense.

Sec. 2. THE BALL IS IN PLAY:

- a. At the start of the game and each half inning when the pitcher has the ball while standing in his pitching position and the plate umpire has called "play ball".
- b. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- c. When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
- d. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching in infielder.
- e. When a fair ball strikes an umpire on foul ground.
- f. When the baserunners have reached the bases to which they are entitled when the the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
- g. When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- h. When no play is being made on an obstructed runner. The ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
- i. When a fair ball is legally batted.
- j. When a baserunner must return in reverse order while the ball is in play.
- k. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
- l. When a base is dislodged while baserunners are progressing around the bases.
- m. When a baserunner runs more than three feet from a direct line between that base and the next one in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder.
- n. When a baserunner is tagged or forced out.
- o. When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- p. When an appeal play is legally being made.
EXCEPTION - Sec. 2p: After time out has been called.
- q. When the batter hits the ball.
- r. When a live ball strike a photographer, groundskeeper, policeman, etc., assigned to the game.
- s. When a fly ball has been legally caught.
- t. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- u. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the judgement of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.
- v. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- w. Whenever the ball is not dead, as provided in Section 1 of this rule.
- x. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- y. As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This includes a subsequent appeal play.

Sec. 3. THE BALL REMAINS ALIVE UNTIL THE UMPIRE CALLS "TIME", WHICH SHOULD BE DONE WHEN THE BALL IS HELD BY A PLAYER IN THE INFIELD AREA AND, IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE UMPIRE, ALL PLAY HAS CEASED.

RULE 10. UMPIRES

NOTE: Failure of umpires to adhere to Rule 10 shall not be grounds for protest. These are guidelines for umpires.

Sec. 1. POWER AND DUTIES

The umpires are the representatives of the league or organization by which they have been assigned to a particular game; and, as such, are authorized and required to enforce each section of these rules. They have the power to order a player, coach, captain, or manager to do or to omit any act which, in their judgement, is necessary to give force and effect to one or all of these rules; and to inflict penalties as herein prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to make decisions on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. THE FOLLOWING IS THE GENERAL INFORMATION FOR UMPIRES:

- a. The umpire will not be a member of either team (i.e., player, coach, manager, officer, scorer, or sponsor).
- b. The umpire should be sure of the date, time, and place of the game and should arrive at the playing field 20-30 minutes ahead of time, start the game on time, and leave the field when the game is over. His jurisdiction begins when he enters the field to check the bats.
- c. The umpires should introduce themselves to the coaches, managers, and scorers.
- d. The umpire should inspect the playing field boundaries, check the equipment (balls and bats), mark-off the three bases and the batter's box, and clarify all ground rules to both teams and their coaches before game time.
- e. Each umpire will have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or during suspension of play until the game is over.
- f. An umpire may consult his associate any time. However, the final decision will rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it is to make the decision and who requests the opinion of the other umpire.
- g. In order to define "respective duties", the umpire judging balls and strikes will be designated as the PLATE UMPIRE, the umpire judging base decisions will be designated as the BASE UMPIRE.
- h. The plate umpire and base umpire will have equal authority to:
 1. Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
 2. Call "TIME" for suspension of play.
 3. Remove a player, coach, or manager from the game for violation of rules.
 4. Call all illegal pitches.
- i. The umpire will declare the batter or baserunner out, without waiting for an appeal for such decision, in all cases where such player is retired in accordance with these rules.

NOTE: Unless appealed to, the umpire will not call a player out for having failed to touch a base, leaving a base too soon on a fly ball, batting out of order or making an attempt to go to second after reaching first base, as provided in these rules.
- j. The umpire will not penalize a team for infraction of a rule when imposing the penalty would be to the advantage of the offending team.

Sec. 2. THE PLATE UMPIRE SHOULD:

- a. Take a position behind the catcher. He will have full charge of and be responsible for the proper conduct of the game.
- b. Call all balls and strikes.

- c. By agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire, call plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls. On plays which would necessitate the base umpire leaving the infield, the plate umpire will assume the duties normally required of the base umpire.
 - d. Determine and declare whether:
 - 1. A batter bunts or chops a ball.
 - 2. A batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter.
 - 3. A fly ball is an infield or an outfield fly.
 - e. Render base decisions as indicated in the Umpire's Manual.
 - f. Determine when a game is forfeited.
 - g. Assume all duties when assigned as a single umpire of a game.
 - h. Call the coach of the home team at least 72 hours before the upcoming Sunday's games to which they are assigned in order to confirm that game's location and start time.
- Sec. 3. THE BASE UMPIRE SHOULD:
- a. Take such positions on the playing field as outlined in the Umpire's Manual.
 - b. Assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.
- Sec. 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SINGLE UMPIRE
- If only one umpire is assigned, his duties and jurisdiction will extend to all points. He will take a position in any part of the field, which, in his judgement, will best enable him to discharge his duties.
- Sec. 5. CHANGE OF UMPIRES
- Umpires cannot be changed during a game by the consent of the opposing teams, unless an umpire is incapacitated by injury or illness.
- Sec. 6. UMPIRE'S JUDGEMENT
- There will be no appeal from any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he was not correct in his conclusion as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner safe or out, a pitched ball a strike or ball, or on any play involving accuracy of judgement; and no decision rendered by any umpire will be reversed, except when he is convinced it is in violation of one of these rules. In case the coach, manager, or either team does seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire, whose decision is in questions, will, if in doubt, confer with his associates before taking any action. But under no circumstances will any player or person, other than the manager, coach, or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules.
- a. Under no circumstances will any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his associates; nor will any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his associates, unless asked to do so.
 - b. The umpire-in-chief may rectify any situation in which the reversal of an umpire's decision or a delayed call by the umpire places a batter-runner or a baserunner in jeopardy.
- Sec. 7. SIGNALS:
- a. To indicate that play will begin or be resumed, the umpire will call "PLAY BALL" and, at the same time, motion the pitcher to deliver the ball.
 - b. To indicate a STRIKE, the umpire will raise his right hand upward; indicate the number of strikes with his fingers and, at the same time, call "STRIKE" in a clear and decisive voice; followed by calling the number of the strike.
 - c. To indicate a BALL, no arm signal is used. The call is "BALL" followed by the number of the ball.
 - d. To indicate the total count of balls and strikes, the balls are called first.
 - e. To indicate a FOUL, the umpire will a call "FOUL BALL" and extend his arm horizontally, away from the diamond, according to the direction of the ball.

- f. To indicate a FAIR BALL, the umpire will extend his arm toward the center of the diamond, using a pumping motion.
- g. To indicate a batter or baserunner OUT, the umpire will raise his right hand upward above his right shoulder, with fingers closed.
- h. To indicate that a player is SAFE, the umpire will extend both arms diagonally in front of his body, with the palms toward the ground.
- i. To indicate suspension of play, the umpire will call "TIME" and extend both arms above his head. All other umpires will immediately acknowledge the suspension of play with similar action.
- j. A DELAYED DEAD BALL will be signified by the umpire extending his left arm horizontally.
- k. To indicate a TRAPPED BALL, the umpire will extend both arms diagonally in front of his body, with palms toward the ground.
- l. To indicate a GROUND RULE DOUBLE, the umpire will extend his right hand above his head and indicate with two fingers the number of bases awarded.
- m. To indicate a HOME RUN, the umpire will extend his right hand with closed fingers above his head and circle arm in a clockwise movement.
- n. To indicate an INFIELD FLY, the umpire will call "INFIELD FLY. IF FAIR THE BATTER IS OUT.". The umpire will extend the right arm above the head.
- o. To indicate to the pitcher that he may not start the pitch, the umpire should raise one hand with the palm facing the pitcher. "NO PITCH" will be declared if the pitcher pitches while the umpire has his hand in said position.

Sec. 8. SUSPENSION OF PLAY:

- a. An umpire may suspend play when, in his judgement, conditions justify such action.
- b. Play will be suspended whenever the plate umpire leaves his position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly connected with the calling of plays.
- c. The umpire will suspend play whenever a batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.
- d. An umpire will not call "time" after pitcher has started his windup.
- e. An umpire will not call "time" while any play is in progress.
- f. In case of injury, "time" will not be called until all plays in progress have been completed or runners have been held at their bases.
- g. Umpires will not suspend play at the request of players, coaches, or managers until all action in process by either team has been completed.
- h. When, in the judgement of an umpire, all immediate play is apparently completed, he should call "time".

NOTE: Any time-out shall not exceed three minutes, except for injury time-outs, and can only be requested by the coaches or any player on the field.

Sec. 9. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES:

- a. Players, coaches, managers, or other team members will not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials or spectators; or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. There will be no more than two coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of their team while at bat. One coach should be stationed near first base and the other near third base. They must remain in their coach's box.
- c. The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first offense, coach or manager must be warned; but for the second offense, he is removed from the game. The offender should leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.

RULE 11. PROTESTS

- Sec. 1. PROTESTS WILL NOT BE RECEIVED OR CONSIDERED IF THEY ARE BASED SOLELY ON A DECISION INVOLVING THE ACCURACY OF JUDGEMENT ON THE PART OF AN UMPIRE.
Examples of protests which will not be considered are:
- Whether a batted ball was fair or foul.
 - Whether a baserunner was safe or out.
 - Whether a pitched ball was a strike or a ball.
 - Whether a pitch was legal or illegal.
 - Whether a baserunner did or did not touch a base.
 - Whether a baserunner left his base too soon on a caught fly ball.
 - Whether a fly ball was or was not caught legally.
 - Whether it was or was not an infield fly.
 - Whether there was or was not an interference.
 - Whether the field is fit to continue or resume play.
 - Whether there is sufficient light to continue play.
 - Any other matter involving only the accuracy of the umpire's judgement.
- Sec. 2. PROTESTS THAT SHALL BE RECEIVED AND CONSIDERED CONCERN MATTERS OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES:
- Misinterpretation of a playing rule.
 - Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation.
 - Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.
- Sec. 3. PROTESTS MAY INVOLVE BOTH A MATTER OF JUDGEMENT AND THE INTERPRETATION OF A RULE.
- Sec. 4. THE NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PROTEST MUST BE MADE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE NEXT PITCH.
- The coach or co-coach of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being conducted under protest. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the opposing coach and official scorekeeper.
 - All interested parties shall take notice of the conditions surrounding the making of the decision which will aid in the correct determination of the issue. The umpire shall write all the details concerning the protest on the scoresheet and sign it.
NOTE: On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, or before the defensive team has left the field. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on the way to the bench or dugout area.
 - Once the game is completed and both teams have left the field, no protest can be filed.
- Sec. 5. THE OFFICIAL WRITTEN PROTEST MUST BE FILED WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE SCHEDULED GAME START TIME.
- Verbal notification of a protest shall be given by Sunday night (9 p.m.) to the protest committee chairperson.
 - Official written protest filing, signed by the umpire and both captains, along with the complete scoresheet in effect at the time of the protest announcement, and the \$10.00 protest fee must be hand delivered to the protest committee chairperson within 48 hours of the completed game's start time.
- Sec. 6. THE FORMAL WRITTEN PROTEST SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:
- The date, time, and place of the game.
 - The names of the umpires and scorers.
 - The rule and section of the Official Rules or local rules under which the protest is made.
 - The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
 - All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

Sec. 7. THE DECISION MADE ON A PROTESTED GAME MUST RESULT IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- a. The protest is found invalid and the game score stands as played and the \$10.00 fee is given to the League treasurer.
- b. When a protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made, with the decision corrected, and the \$10.00 fee is returned to the team filing the protest.
- c. When a protest for ineligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game being played or the game last played to the offended team.

Sec. 8. THE PROTEST COMMITTEE

- a. Each league team will have a designated protest committee member or alternate. This person can be any team member.
- b. The protest committee chairperson is the commissioner.
- c. Protest committee decision will be given before the following week's games and will include when and where the protested game shall be resumed (if applicable), and will be binding on both teams. The protest committee chairperson shall call the necessary meeting.
- d. At no time shall any protesting team member call any member of the protest committee or the umpire who covered the protested game.
- e. The teams involved in the protest are not part of the protest committee.

RULE 12. SCORING

Sec. 1. SCORESHEETS

The existing League scoresheet contains sufficient game information.

Sec. 2. SCOREKEEPERS

The designated scorekeeper(s) on each team shall exchange the current score and any batting line-up changes, due to injuries or players leaving early, at least once an inning.