



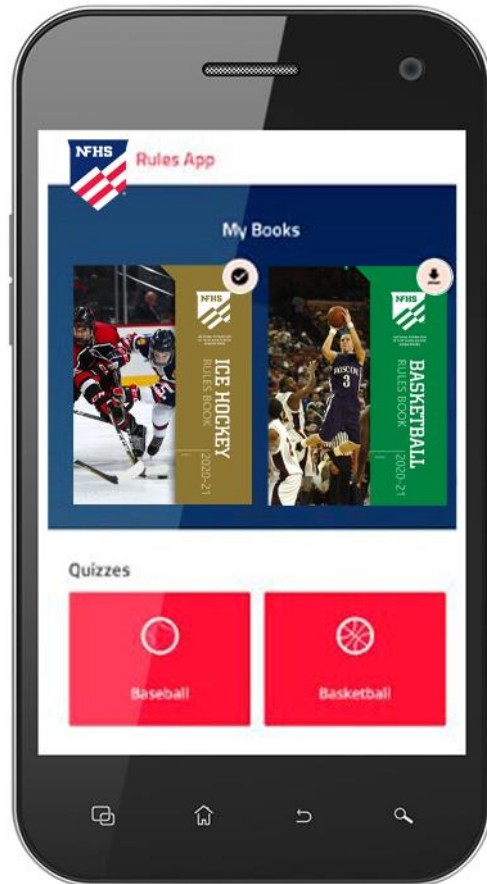
2022 NFHS SOFTBALL RULES POWERPOINT

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Rules Changes
Major Editorial Changes
Points of Emphasis

NEW NFHS RULES APP



- Rules App features:
 - Searchable
 - Highlight notes
 - Bookmarks
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 - Immediate availability
 - Free to paid members of the NFHS Coaches and Officials Associations
 - www.nfhs.org/erules for more information





2022 NFHS SOFTBALL RULES CHANGES





BASES, PLATES RULE 1-2-1



- Bases may be designed to disengage from their anchor system.

Language change, clarifies that break away bases are permitted. If the base becomes dislodged, the runner will NOT be out for being off the base.



SOFTBALLS

RULE 1-3-3

Play	Size	COR	Compression	Weight & Circumference
Slow Pitch	11"	.44 max	375 lbs. max	5 ⁷ / ₈ to 6 ¹ / ₈ ounces 10 ⁷ / ₈ to 11 ¹ / ₄ inches
Slow Pitch	12"	.44 max	375 lbs. max	6 ¹ / ₄ to 7 ounces 11 ⁷ / ₈ to 12 ¹ / ₄ inches
Fast Pitch	12"	.47 max	375 lbs. max <u>*325 lbs. +/- 50</u>	6 ¹ / ₄ to 7 ounces 11 ⁷ / ₈ to 12 ¹ / ₄ inches <u>*6 ¹/₂ to 7 ounces</u> 11 ⁷ / ₈ to 12 ¹ / ₄ inches

- The new ball specifications are permissible currently and will be required January 1, 2025, for high school competition.
- Balls manufactured with the current specifications will be permitted for use through 2024.

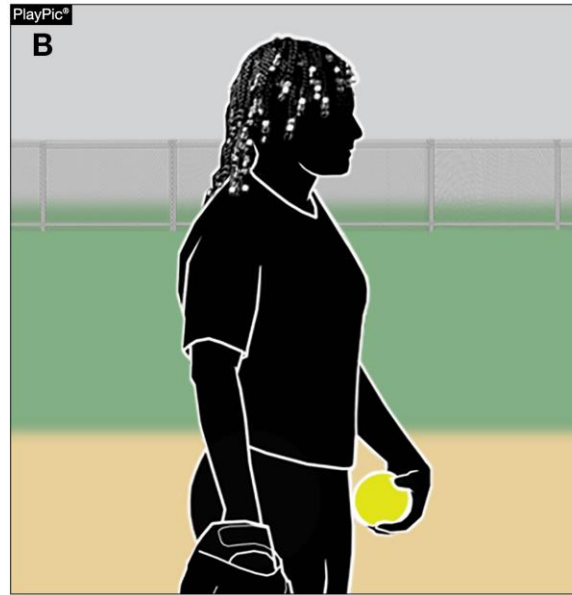
No increase in bat/ball speed.
Actually a slight decrease.



*Mandatory January 1, 2025



UNIFORMS, PLAYER EQUIPMENT RULE 3-2-5b, 3-2-12



Plastic visors and bandannas are still prohibited. However, language prohibiting hard items to control the hair, such as beads, has been removed.

Removes the language prohibiting hard items to control the hair .

Aligns language with other NFHS rules codes.

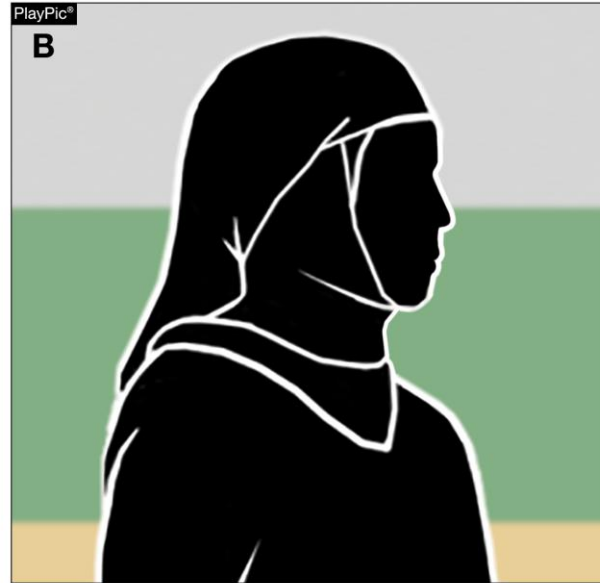
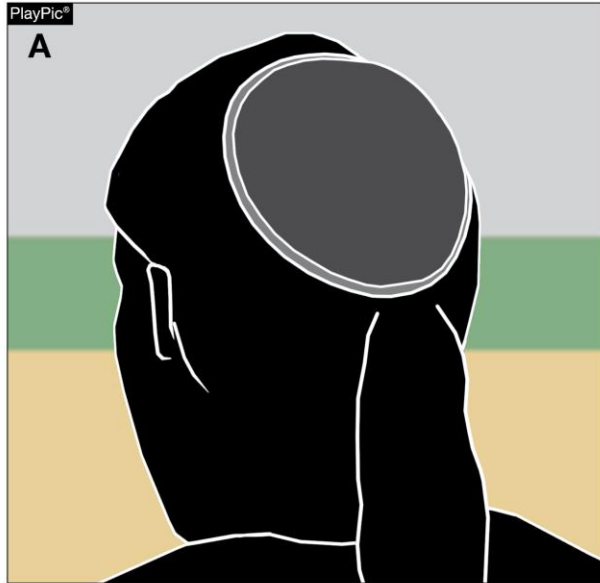
Language was also removed in Rule 3-2-12 that prohibited players from wearing hard cosmetic or decorative items.





UNIFORMS, PLAYER EQUIPMENT

RULE 3-2-5c



Players may wear head coverings for religious reasons. The headwear must be made of non-abrasive, soft materials and must fit securely so that it is unlikely to come off during play. Head coverings worn for medical reasons must still receive state association approval.

This rule change eliminates the need for authorization from the state association for religious headwear.

The CIF Section office shall be notified after the contest if there is a concern as to whether the head covering was worn for religious reasons.





COACH ATTIRE RULE 3-5-3



- While in live-ball areas, a coach shall be attired in a school uniform or jersey/coaching shirt with slacks, shorts, or other leg coverings in school colors or colors of khaki, black, white or gray.

The rule hasn't changed from the umpire's point of view.

Additional language brings a coach's attire up to date with current language used to describe a coaching garment.

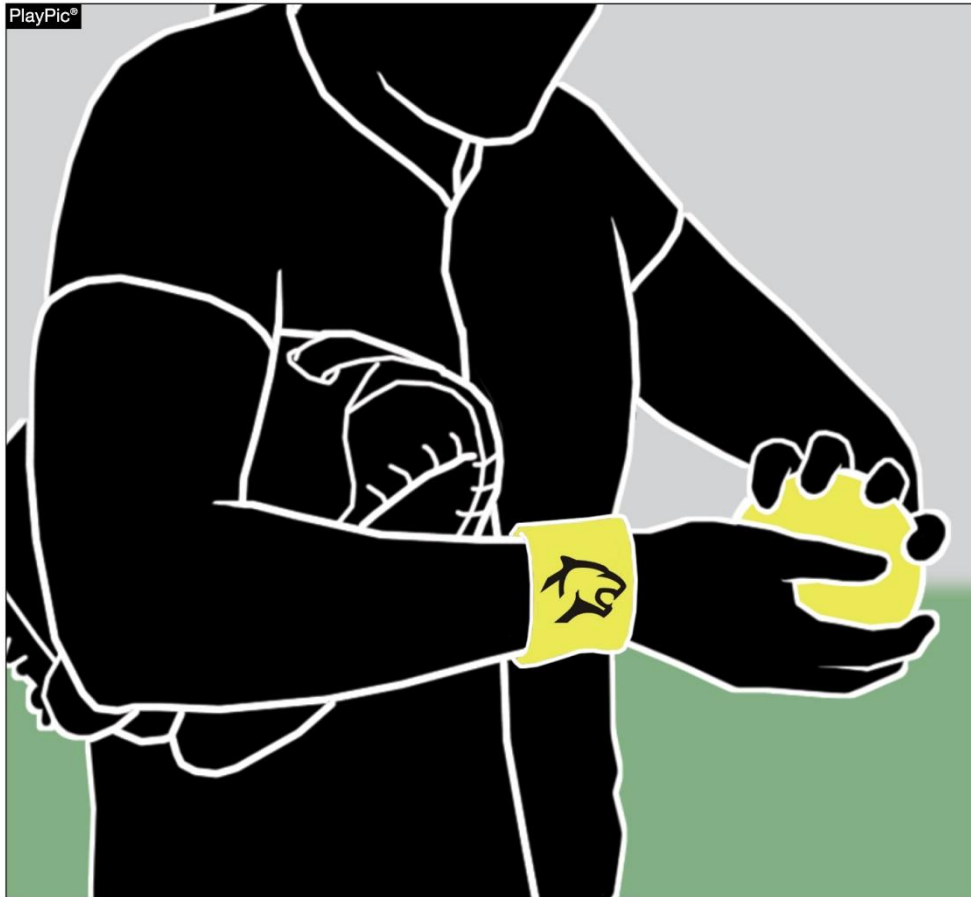
BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT RULE 3-6-21 & PENALTY (NEW)



Batters shall not use a damaged bat that was previously removed from the game by an umpire. **PENALTY:** The batter shall be called out and the batter and head coach shall be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.

This new article clarifies that a damaged bat, which had been previously removed by an umpire, cannot be reintroduced to the game. It also adds a penalty, which states that the batter is out, and both the player and the head coach are restricted to the dugout.

INFRACTIONS BY PITCHER (FP) RULE 6-2-2 & NOTE (NEW)

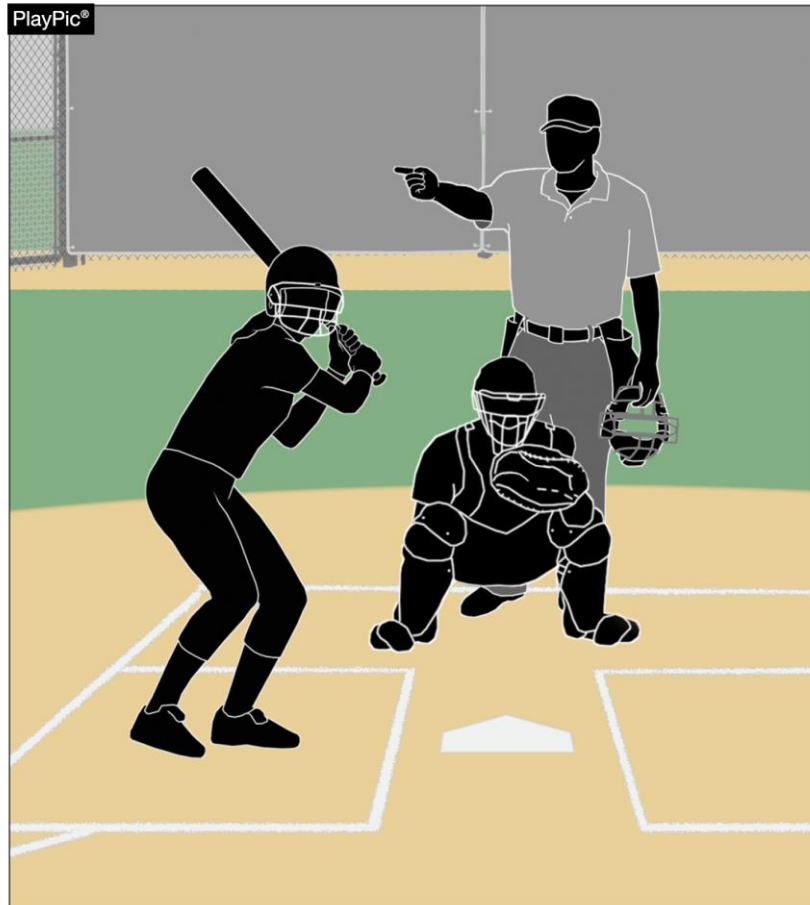


Pitchers are prohibited from wearing anything on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thighs which the umpire judges to be distracting to the batter.

The pitcher having an item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh is a violation of the equipment rule and is already addressed in 3-2-9 with a penalty.

The illegal equipment shall be removed.

DAMAGED BAT RULE 7-4-15 (NEW)



- Adds language to identify a batter entering the batter's box with a damaged bat previously removed from the game is out.

The addition of Rule 3-6-21, which defines the penalty for re-introducing a previously removed damaged bat to the game, necessitated adding new Rule 7-4-15 defining situations when the batter is out.

BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT RULE 8-2-6



- A runner is considered outside the running lane if either foot last contacted the ground completely outside the lane.

The change clarifies a batter-runner's location in relationship to the running lane when either foot is in the air. The batter-runner is considered outside of the running lane if either foot last contacted the ground completely outside the running lane.

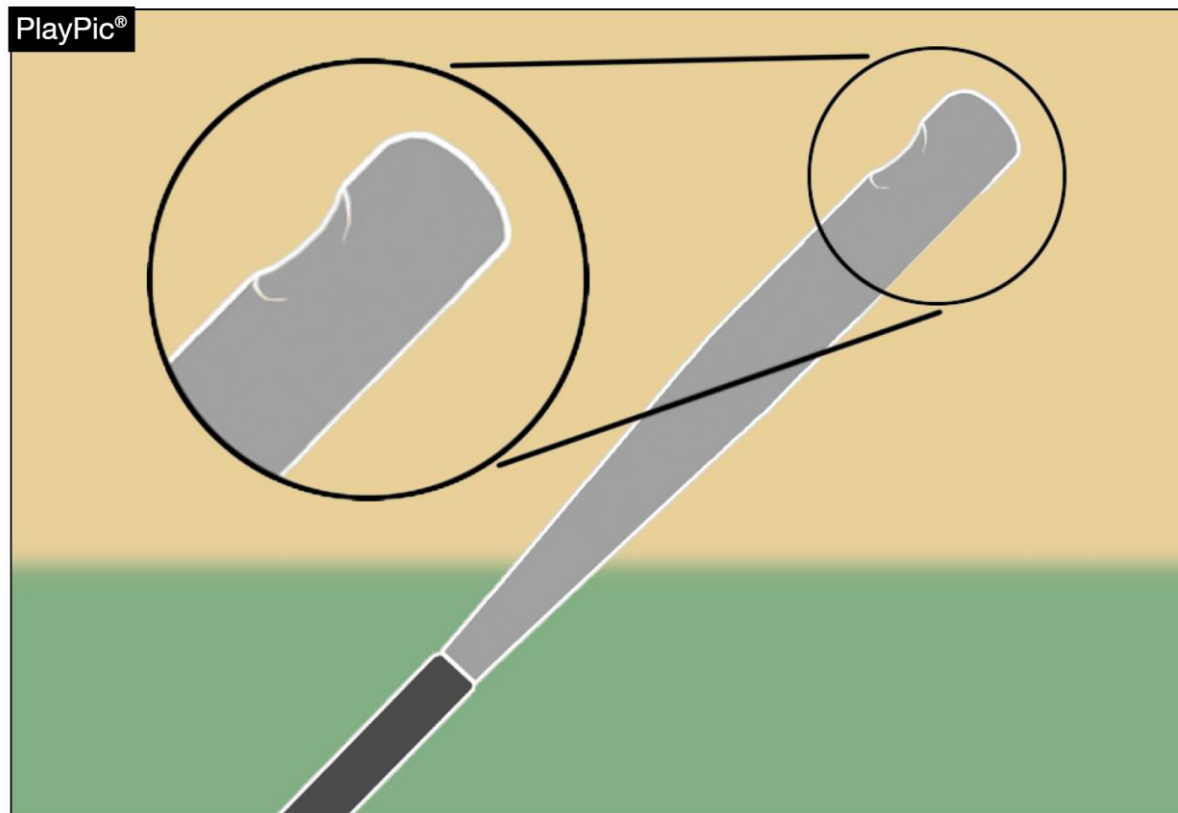


2022 NFHS SOFTBALL MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES





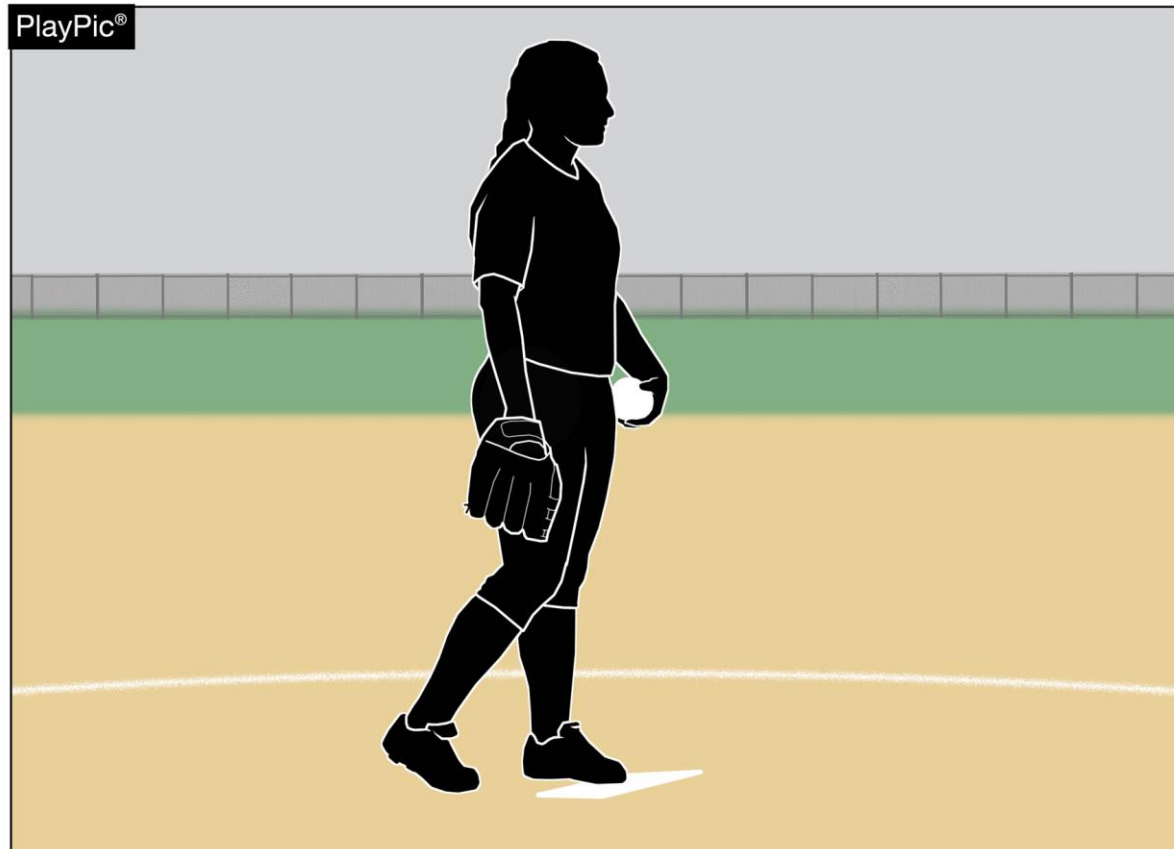
DAMAGED BAT RULE 2-4-3



- A damaged bat is one that could deface the ball and the bat shall be removed when initially detected without penalty.
- Also, a penalty was added for a batter detected using a damaged bat after it has been previously removed from the game.



PITCHER RULE 2-44



- The pitcher is the player who is ~~designated in the scorebook as being~~ responsible for delivering (pitching) the ball to the batter.

Because defensive changes, including to the pitcher, are not required to be reported; the pitcher may not be designated in the scorebook.



WARM-UP PITCHES RULE 3-7-1 NOTE



- Clarifies no warm-up pitches are permitted if a pitcher is removed and then returns to the pitching circle in the same half-inning.



DOUBLEHEADERS RULE 4-2-3 NOTE 2

- The number of innings for one or both games of a doubleheader may be scheduled for less than seven innings, by state association adoption.





DEAD BALL RULE 5-1

TABLE 5-1

BALL DEAD IMMEDIATELY

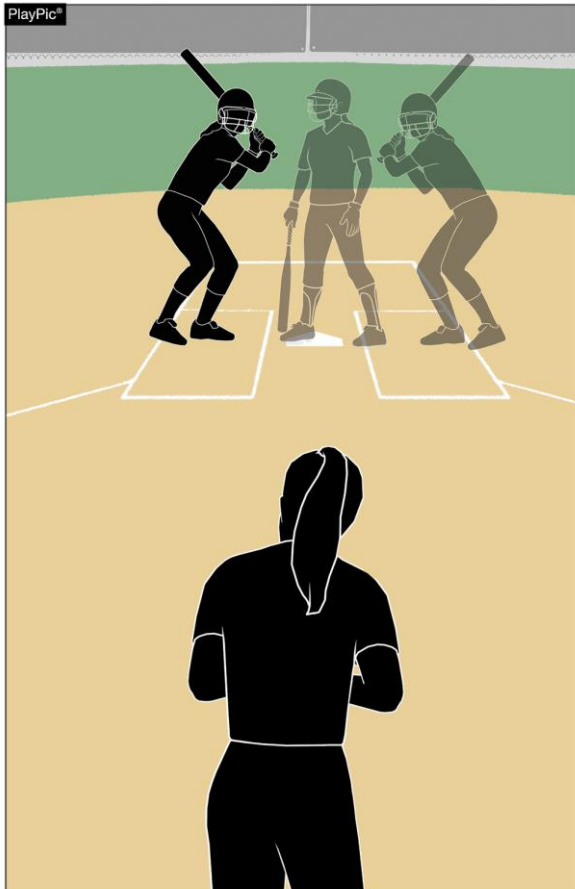
Activity	References	Awards or Penalties	References
12. Fair ball touches a spectator.	5-1-1f	Award all runners appropriate number of bases in umpire's judgement.	8-4-3j
13. Fair ball bounces over, through or lodges in fence.	5-1-1f	Award all runners two bases.	8-4-3g

- Table 5-1 previously combined two different rules with two completely different penalties/awards. The change separates the two rules and penalties/awards.
- The remaining rule references were renumbered.



BATTER'S BOX RESTRICTIONS

RULE 7-3-1



- A batter may not step out of the batter's box when the pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate.

Aligns language with a rule change from the previous year.

The pitch **SHALL** be called a strike.

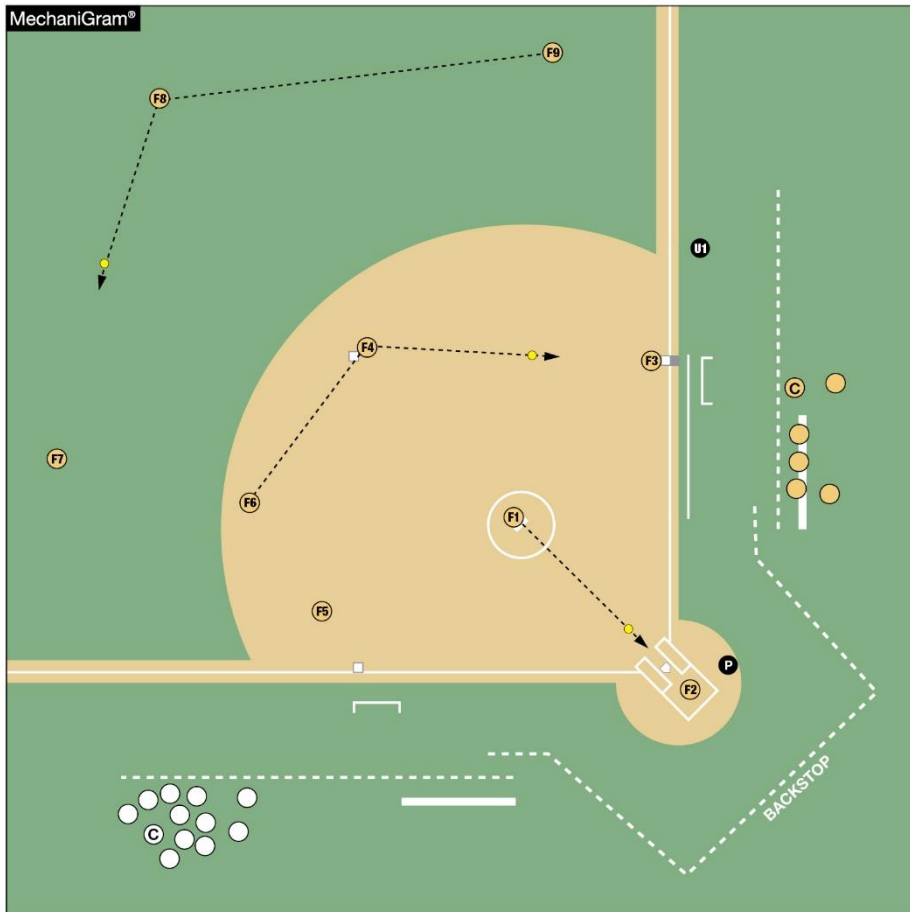


2022 NFHS SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS





HUDDLES BETWEEN INNINGS



- Teams choosing to huddle:
 - should be in a safe location when the other team is warming up on the field;
 - does not impede the warm up of the defensive team;
 - does not place them in areas where overthrows are likely.

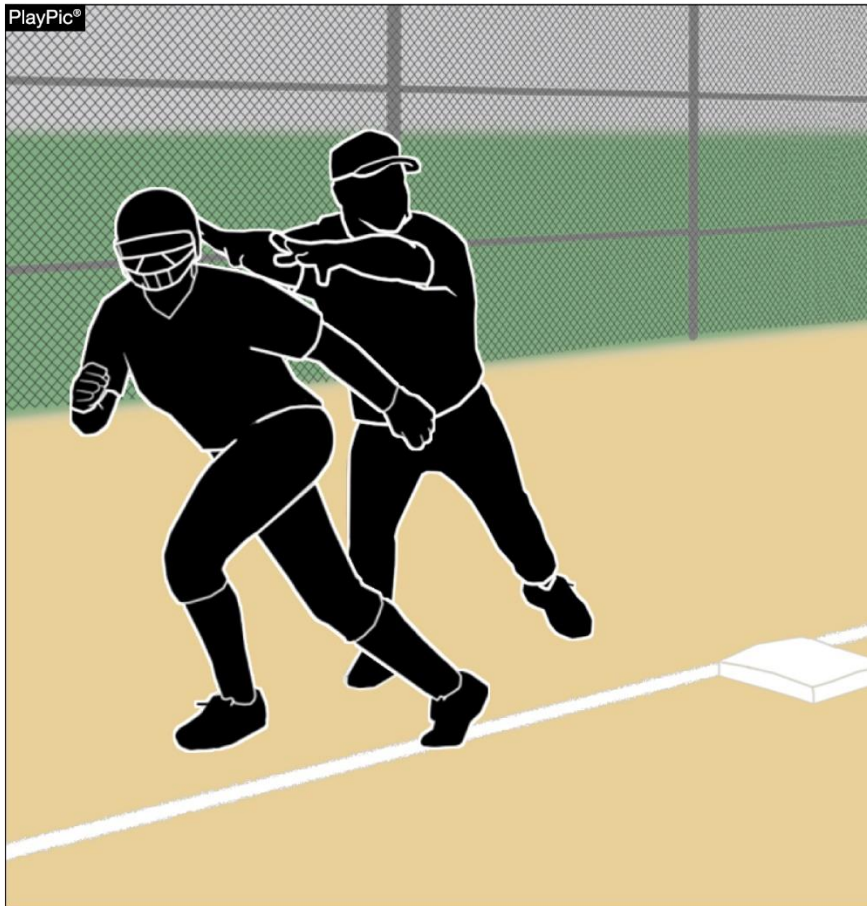


GUIDANCE FOR PITCHER UTILIZATION



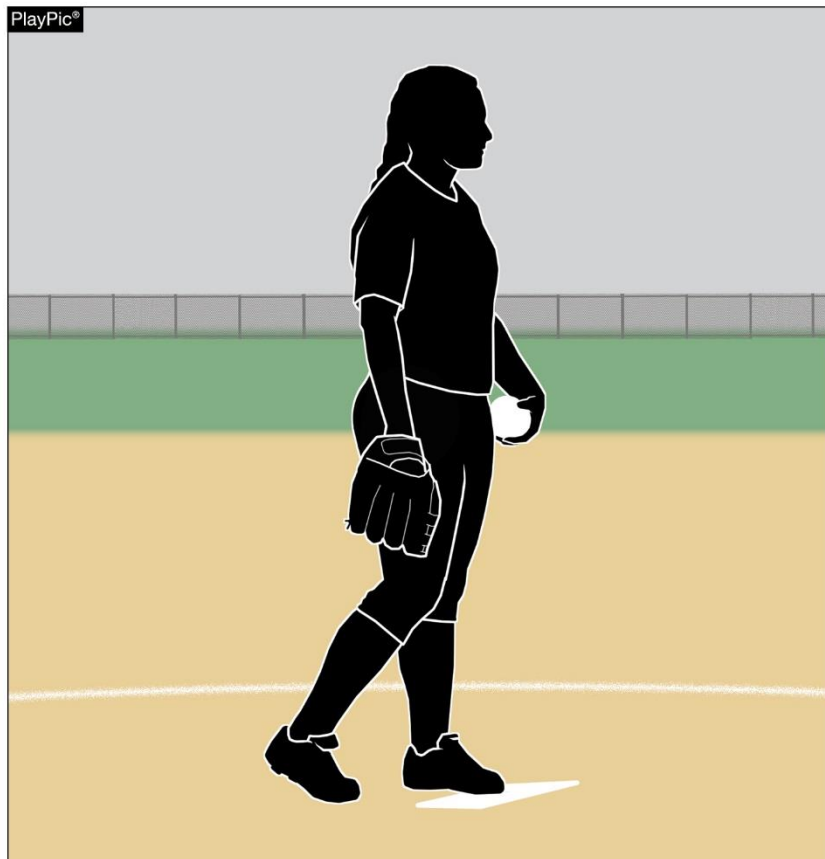
- Ongoing concern regarding overuse injuries of the shoulder and elbow of softball pitchers at the high school level;
- Available injury data do not warrant the implementation of pitch or inning limitations;
- Committees will continue to monitor all available research.

ASSISTING A RUNNER



- Coaches or any other team personnel are not permitted to assist a runner during playing action.
- When a home run occurs, although the ball is out of play (enters dead ball territory), runners have live ball running responsibilities and are still required to legally run the bases.

PITCHER SIMULATING TAKING A SIGN



- While the pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and prior to bringing the hands together, the pitcher must take or simulate taking a signal from the catcher.
- A signal may be taken from a coach either by hand signal, verbal call, or by looking up on a wristband with a playbook/play card.
- If the pitcher does not pause after stepping onto the pitcher's plate, an illegal pitch should be called.



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NFHS SOFTBALL RESOURCES

- NFHS Rules Books, Case Books and other softball resources can be ordered:
 - online at www.nfhs.com
 - by calling 1-800-776-3462

