

# SOFTBALL RULES CHANGES FOR 2023

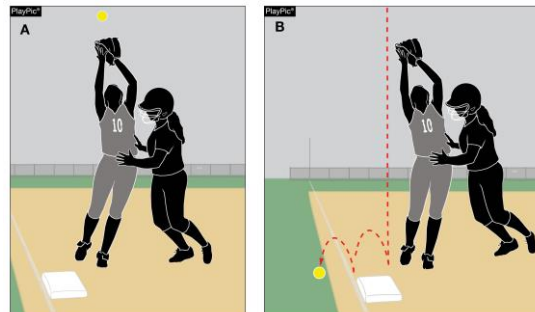
## 1. Rule 1-4-1a, b: Gloves/Mitts

- Gloves/mitts are now permitted to be more than two colors.
- Gloves/mitts, lacing and seams still may not be the color of the ball.
- The glove still cannot have an optic-colored marking which gives the appearance of the ball or is judged to be distracting to the umpire.



## 2. 2-20-1g (NEW): Fair Ball

- If an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball while the ball is over fair territory, it is a fair ball.
  - This change allows the definition of a fair ball to reflect what umpires have always enforced as part of the definition of a fair ball. It is intended to mirror the definition of a foul ball. (2-25-1e)



## 3. Rule 3-6-11: Uniforms, Player Equipment, Bench and Field Conduct

- Jewelry is no longer prohibited. However, Rule 1-8-6 is still in effect, which prohibits team personnel from using electronic devices to communicate or transmit data outside of the dugout.
  - **DO NOT** go looking for jewelry!
  - Umpires still have the authority to rule on anything that is considered a distraction or increases risk to any player.



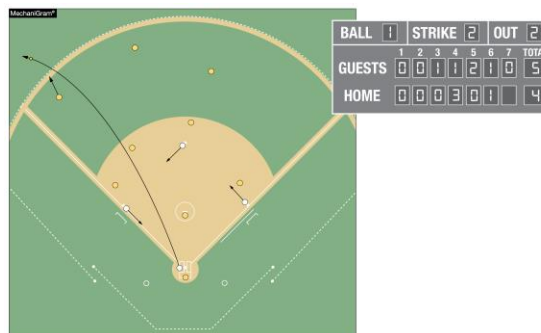
- Clarifies where electronic devices may be used for coaching purposes during a game.
  - The use of electronic devices by team personnel to transmit or record information pertaining to their players or team's performance is only permitted within the dugout.
  - Items such as smartwatches are permitted to be utilized as a watch but cannot be used to transmit or receive data from outside of the dugout.



## NFHS MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES FOR 2023

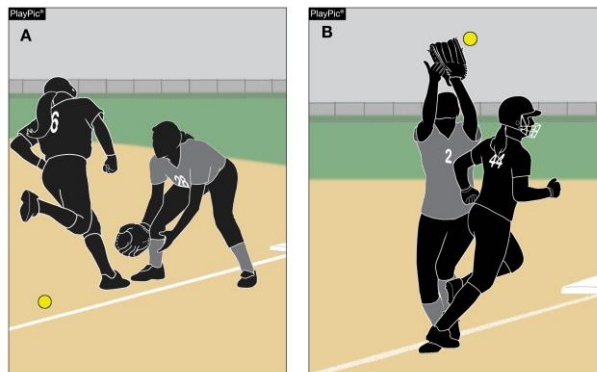
### 1. Rule 4-2-1: Ending a Game

- Allows for all runs to be counted when a fair batted ball clears the home run fence to end the game.



### 2. Rule 8-2-7: Batter-Runner Is Out

- Clarifies and further defines what constitutes batter-runner interference; including while a fielder is attempting to field a fly ball over foul territory.
  - The language is consistent with the rule covering interference on an initial play on a fair-batted ball and aligns with Rule 8-6-10.



### 3. Rule 1-3-3: Softballs

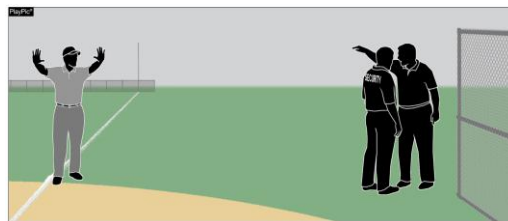
- The new ball specifications are permissible currently and will be required January 1, 2025, for high school competition.
  - Balls manufactured with the current specifications will be permitted for use through 2024.

Play	Size	COR	Compression	Weight & Circumference
Slow Pitch	11"	.44 max	375 lbs. max	5 ½ to 6 ½ ounces 10 ¾ to 11 ¼ inches
Slow Pitch	12"	.44 max	375 lbs. max	6 ¼ to 7 ounces 11 ¾ to 12 ¼ inches
Fast Pitch	12"	.47 max	375 lbs. max *325 lbs. +/- 50	6 ¼ to 7 ounces 11 ¾ to 12 ¼ inches *6 ½ to 7 ounces 11 ¾ to 12 ¼ inches

## NFHS POINTS OF EMPHASIS FOR 2023

### 1. Sportsmanship

- NFHS playing rules are written to encourage sportsmanship. Participation in these programs should promote *respect*, *integrity* and *sportsmanship*.
  - However, for these ideals to occur, everyone involved in these programs must be doing their part.
- There must be a collaborative, working relationship between contest officials and game administration to promote good sportsmanship and safely conduct the contest.
  - Everyone has their roles to play in creating a positive, sportsmanlike atmosphere at contests.
- Contest officials should never engage with spectators who are exhibiting unsporting behavior.
  - Once the contest begins, school administration is responsible for dealing with unruly spectators.
  - If spectators are using demeaning or profane language at officials – or at others in the stands – those individuals should be removed from the contest by school administration.
- Good sports win with *humility*, lose with *grace* and do both with *dignity*.
  - It takes the efforts of everyone every day to ensure that sportsmanship remains one of the top priorities in education-based activity programs.



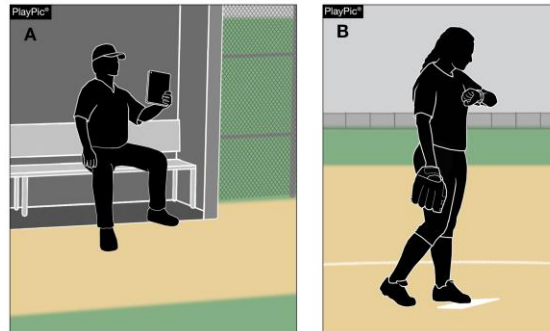
### 2. Time Between Innings

- Umpires and coaches should pay strict attention to the 60-second time limit between half-innings.
  - At the beginning of each half-inning no more than one minute may be used to deliver no more than five pitches to the catcher or other teammate.
  - The one-minute time limit begins from the third out of the previous half-inning.

- A pitcher returning to the pitching position in the same half inning will not be granted any warm-up pitches.
- Umpires may authorize more pitches during inclement weather or if a pitcher was removed due to injury or by rule.

### 3. Jewelry and Electronic Communication

- The rule prohibiting jewelry has been removed.
- The rule regarding the use of electronics is still in place.
  - The use of electronic devices by team personnel to transmit or record information pertaining to their players or team's performance is only permitted within the dugout.
  - Items such as smart watches are permitted to be utilized as a watch but cannot be used to transmit or receive data outside of the dugout.



### 4. Comparable Drying Agents

- Pitchers are not permitted to use any foreign substance on the ball or on contact points of the pitching hand or fingers.
  - No foreign substances may be applied to the ball.
  - If a pitcher licks their fingers, the player must wipe their fingers prior to touching the ball.
- Comparable drying agents listed on the USA Softball website (USAsoftball.org) are permitted, and powdered rosin is also permitted.
  - <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment>
  - Powder Resin can be on the ground and Gorilla Grip must be kept in the back pocket.
  - Can be rubbed on your hand but neither can be rubbed on the ball, the same as dirt.



- It is not necessary to wipe off the drying agent before making contact with the ball.