



OFFICIAL RULES OF SOFTBALL

2022-2025 RULE CHANGES

APPROVED BY THE RULES COMMISSION, OCTOBER 11, 2021

1.2.4 c)

If an incorrect runner is placed on second base, they shall be called out if a proper appeal is made by the defensive team after a pitch (legal or illegal) or play and is upheld. A proper appeal may be made at any time the incorrect runner is on base. If the offensive team places the correct runner on base before a proper appeal is made, there is no penalty.

1.2.6 a) iv)

at any time an incorrect runner is on base in a tiebreaker Inning or as a temporary runner for the catcher or pitcher of record.

1.2.6 e x)

the use of an incorrect runner on second base in a tiebreaker inning or as a temporary runner for the catcher or pitcher of record.

2.1.5

COACHES' BOX: The area in foul territory on the first base and third base side of the playing field in which the offensive coaches must position themselves (see Appendix 1-F for dimensions).

2.1.10

MITT: A mitt consists of a solid piece for finger placement, no finger slots and a deeper pocket than a glove. A glove has separated finger slots on the outside and back (see Appendix 4 Glove Specifications).

2.1.13

ON-DECK CIRCLE: The area to which the on-deck batter is restricted while waiting their turn at bat (see Appendix 1- F for location and dimensions).

2.5.1 a) ii)

Caps, visors and headbands are optional for female players, and players are free to choose which of these they wish to wear. Each



must be of the same color and style of the team uniform colors. Plastic or hard visors are not allowed.

2.5.1 b) ii)

A player may wear one or two warming sleeves (compression sleeves) provided that each is the same one solid color that is a team uniform color and that the color matches all other undershirts worn by any player on that team.

2.4-2.6

Effects (all)

<p>Rule 2.4.2 Rule 2.4.3 a) Rule 2.4.3 (c-d) 2.5.1 2.6</p>	<p>Wearing Improper Shoes Failure of a catcher to wear a helmet, mask or throat protector Failure to wear mandatory equipment Improper uniform or improper wearing of a uniform by a player Improper dress by a coach</p>
<p>Effect</p>	<p>After a warning from the umpire and a failure to comply or a repetition of the violation, the violator shall be ejected from the game.</p>

3.1.6

FLEX PLAYER (FLEX)

3.1.8

ILLEGAL RE-ENTRY: An illegal re-entry occurs when:

- a) a starting player returns to the game in a different batting position in the line-up;
- b) a substitute re-enters the game, not as a replacement player;
- c) a starting player re-enters the game a second time, not as a replacement player;
- d) an ineligible replacement player enters the game; or
- e) the FLEX enters the game on offense for a player other than the DP.

3.1.9

UNREPORTED SUBSTITUTION: An unreported substitution occurs when a player enters the game without being reported to the responsible umpire as:





- a) a substitute;
- b) a player eligible to enter, return to or stay in the game under the provisions of the replacement player rule;
- c) a declared ineligible player;
- d) an illegal re-entry.

3.1.12

An ineligible replacement player entering the game is considered an illegal re-entry. Inserted into 3.1.11

3.1.19

ROSTER: The list of all players eligible to be entered on a team's line-up card.

3.1.22

TEMPORARY RUNNER added as 3.1.23: A player who may run for the catcher or pitcher of record who is on base with two outs.

3.2.3 e)

All starting players, including the DP and the FLEX, may be substituted or re-enter the line-up once and must remain in the same batting position whenever they are in the line-up. A violation of this rule is considered an illegal re-entry.

3.2.4 a)

A DP may bat for any defensive player who is designated as the FLEX.

3.2.4 b) iv)

A team's line-up may revert to 10 players by a player:

- a) entering a substitute into the FLEX position; or
- b) re-entering the original starting FLEX, but only once.

3.2.5 c) ii)i

A team's line-up may revert to 10 players by a player:

- a) entering a substitute into the DP position; or
- b) re-entering the original starting DP player, but only once.

3.2.5 d)

A FLEX that enters the game on offense for a player other than the DP is considered an illegal re-entry.



3.2.6 d)

A team representative must notify the Plate Umpire of all line-up card changes. A proper appeal of the failure to do so that is upheld shall result in that player being declared an unreported substitution.

3.2.7 TEMPORARY RUNNER

A temporary runner is legal for a catcher or pitcher of record who is listed in the starting line-up in the top of the first inning or is the catcher or pitcher of record from the previous half inning who is on base with two (2) outs. The following provisions apply:

- a) the use of the temporary runner is optional for the offensive team;
- b) the temporary runner may be used any time after the second out occurs; and
- c) the temporary runner is the player scheduled to bat last who is not on base at the time the option is taken.

If an incorrect runner is used as a temporary runner, the runner shall be called out if a proper appeal made by the defensive team after a pitch or play is made and the appeal is upheld. A proper appeal may be made at any time the incorrect runner is on base. If the offense places the correct runner on base before a proper appeal is made, there is no penalty.

3.2.8 a)

A substitute named on the line-up card may take the place of any player in line-up. Multiple substitutions may be made for a player that is listed in the starting line-up, but no substitute may return to the game after being substituted (removed from the game), except as a replacement player. A substitute who re-enters the game as a player is an illegal re-entry.

3.2.8 h)

An ineligible player may not return to the game as a player.

3.1 and 3.2

Effects

Rule 3.2.2 a, 3.2.3 c and 3.2.6 c	Failure to complete a game with the required number of players.
Effect	The game is forfeited to the non-offending team.



Rule 3.1.10 a-b,
3.2.4 b ii, 3.2.5
c ii, 3.2.6 d
and 3.2.8 a-e

Unreported Substitution of:

- a) A substitute;
- b) A player under the Replacement player rule

Effect

- a) An unreported substitute may be appealed.
 - b) The appeal must be brought to the attention of the responsible Umpire while the unreported substitute is in the game.
 - c) Once a pitch has been thrown or a play has been made and the unreported substitute has been discovered, the player is declared an ineligible player.
 - d) A legal substitute must replace the ineligible player. If the team in violation does not have a legal substitute, the game is forfeited in favor of the non-offending team.
 - e) If the unreported substitute is properly appealed while at bat, a legal substitute will assume the ball and strike count.
 - i. All play completed prior to the discovery and succesful appeal of an unreported substitute is legal; however, if the unreported substitute bats, reaches base or scores and is then discovered and a proper appeal is made and upheld before a pitch is thrown to the next batter, or at the end of the game and before the umpires leave the field, all runners will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch and the unreported substitute is called out.
 - ii. Every out made while an unreported substitute is in the game will stand.
 - f) If an unreported substitute is discovered on defense and after making a play or if the player is a pitcher and a pitch has been thrown and a proper appeal is made and upheld, the offensive team has the option of 1) taking the result of the play or 2) having the batter return to bat and assume the batter's ball and strike count prior to the discovery and successful appeal of the unreported substitute. Each runner would return to the base occupied prior to the play or pitch.
 - g) After an upheld appeal for an unreported substitute or an illegal re-entry, the original player or their substitute is considered to have left the game.
 - h) A substitute that is an illegal re-entry shall be subject to the penalty for the violation involved.
 - i) A substitute that is a declared Ineligible Player will receive the penalty for that violation.
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Rule 3.1.9,
3.1.12 3.2.3 e,
3.2.5 d, and
3.2.8

Illegal re-entry

Effect

1. This is subject to appeal, which can be made anytime while the illegal re-entered player is in the game and does not have to be made before the next pitch.
 - a) The head coach named on the line-up card and the illegal re-entered player are ejected.
 - b) A legal substitute must replace the ejected illegal re-entered player before the game can continue.
 - c) A new head coach must be named.
 - d) If the illegal re-entry is also an unreported substitute, both effects must be applied.
 - e) If an illegal re-entry is not appealed and if this results in both the illegal re-entry and the original player remaining in the game with the result that a number of consecutive players in the batting order to become illegal re-entries:
 - i. only the most recent illegal re-entry may be appealed; This player and the head coach named shall be ejected;
 - ii. the Effects for an illegal substitution also apply;
 - iii. a legal substitute must be entered into the game for the ejected player and a new head coach named;
 - iv. all other illegal re-entries who are not the direct subject of the appeal must return to their original position in the batting order without being considered an illegal re-entry and all plays stand, except as noted.

Should the FLEX enter on offense for a player other than the DP, is one of two or more Illegal Re-entries and is on base at the time of the appeal, even though the FLEX is not the direct subject of the appeal, the FLEX shall be removed from the base and returned to the 10th position on the line-up card. This is not an additional out. The Flex who is removed from a base is not replaced by another runner.

Rule 3.1.10 c
and 3.1.11

Ineligible Player returning to the game

Effect

When a declared Ineligible player returns to the game, a forfeit is declared in favor of the non-offending team.



3.3 a)

An appeal must be made by a manager, coach or player before an umpire may consider and make a decision on:

- i) an unreported substitution;
- ii) an illegal re-entry; or
- iii) an ineligible player.

3.4.3. c)

While in a coaches' box, a base coach may hold a non-electronic, non-reflective scorebook, pen or pencil and an indicator, all of which must be used only for scorekeeping or recordkeeping purposes.

4.1.9

SLINGSHOT PITCH: A pitch where the pitcher drops their pitching arm to the side and the rear before starting a quick slingshot action and accelerating with their forward motion. To be a legal pitch, the pitcher must release the ball on the first forward motion past the hip and not make a full revolution of the pitching arm. A slingshot pitch is legal in fastpitch but not in modified pitch.

4.2.2 b)

From the dugout a manager, coach or player reports a substitution to the responsible umpire and after making that substitution crosses the foul line to talk to the pitcher or any fielder.

4.3.3 b)

The pitcher may make only one revolution on a windmill pitch. The pitcher may drop their pitching arm to the side and rear before starting the windmill motion or the slingshot motion. The pitching arm may pass the hip twice on the windmill pitch, but only once on a slingshot pitch.

4.3.5 b)

Under the supervision and control of an umpire, a resin bag may be used to dry the hands and must be kept on the ground behind the pitcher's plate within the pitching circle when not in use. During inclement weather or wet field conditions and with an umpire's permission, the resin bag may be placed in the pitcher's back pocket.





5.1.37

PICK-OFF PLAY: An attempt by the defensive team to put out a runner who is off their base as a result of a pitched ball.

5.1.38

PLAY: After a pitch and when the ball is live:

- a) a batter takes a pitch in the batter's box, swings at or hits the pitch and runs to first base;
- b) after the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand a runner attempts to steal a base or advance on a batted ball; or
- c) the defensive team attempts to put out a batter-runner or a runner.
- d) A pitch is not a play

5.4.2 c)

No manager, coach or player may erase a batter's box lines at any time.

5.4.3 b) iv)

When at any time a defensive team member erases the lines of a batter's box, a ball will be called on the next scheduled offensive team batter or the offensive team batter currently at bat. A pitch does not have to be thrown. When at any time an offensive team member erases the lines of a batter's box, a strike will be called on the next scheduled offensive team batter or the offensive team batter currently at bat. A pitch does not have to be thrown.

5.4.4 c) iii)

Interferes with a play at home plate. If in the umpire's judgement the batter's action constitutes intentional interference, the runner attempting to score is also out;

5.10.3 b) iv)

The batter or batter-runner is declared out for intentionally interfering with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out on an advancing runner at the plate. The advancing runner is out and all other runners must return to the base held at the time of the pitch. This is already in, but as 5.10.3 b) vi.

5.10.4

THE RUNNER IS NOT OUT: A runner is not out:





- g. when they are hit by a live, fair and untouched batted ball while in contact with their base, unless they intentionally interfere with the ball or a fielder making a play. The ball is dead or remains live, depending on the position of the fielder closest to the base at the time the ball contacts the runner:
- i. the ball remains live if the fielder closest to the base is positioned ahead of the base;
- ii. the ball becomes dead if the fielder is behind the base.

Alternative

when they are hit by a live, fair and untouched batted ball while in contact with their base, unless they intentionally interfere with the ball or a fielder making a play. The ball remains live if the fielder closest to the base is positioned ahead of the base, and is dead if that fielder is positioned behind the base.

APPENDICES

Appendix 2 A 9

A bat that has any exposed rivets, pins, rough or sharp edges or any exterior fastener that is or presents a hazard is an illegal bat. A non-wooden bat must be free of burrs and cracks.

Appendix 2 A 10

A non-wooden bat must not have a wooden handle.

Appendix 2 A 12

A bat that is non-wooden and not made of one-piece construction with the barrel end closed must have a rubber or vinyl plastic or other material insert that is approved by the WBSC Equipment Standards Commission and is firmly secured at the large end of the bat.