



2025 NFHS BASEBALL RULES CHANGES AND POINTS OF EMPHASIS



**PLAY.
PERFORM.
COMPETE.
TOGETHER.**

B. Elliot Hopkins, MLD, CAA

NFHS Director of Sports, Sanctioning and Student Services



1-3-2c1 BATS, BALLS AND GLOVES



- Resin, pine tar or any drying agent are permitted to enhance the hold on any bat, and it is not to exceed beyond 18 inches from the base of the knob.
- The rule change creates consistency between wood bats and non-wood bats. On non-wood bats, drying agents are no longer permitted on the grip only.



BATS, BALLS AND GLOVES

1-3-2c1

ART. 2 . . . The bat shall have the following characteristics and components.

Sub-articles a-b remains the same.

c. Each bat not made of a single piece of wood shall:

1. Have a safety grip made of cork, tape (no smooth, plastic tape) or commercially manufactured composition material. The grip must extend a minimum of 10 inches, but not more than 18 inches, from the base of the knob.



BATS, BALLS AND GLOVES

1-3-2c1

Slippery tape or similar material shall be prohibited. Resin, pine tar or any drying agent are permitted to enhance the hold on the bat, not to exceed beyond 18 inches from the base of the knob. Molded grips are illegal.

Rationale:

Risk minimization and consistency. This change allows the batter to have better control over their non-wood bat, so it does not slip out of their hands. It also makes the rule the same for wood bats and non-wood bats.



RULE IS THE SAME BUT PENALTIES DIFFER:

OBR=Bats must be replaced; Results remain in place.
Batter is not out.

NCAA=Bat must be removed and Batter warned. No out is declared. If practice continues, player is ejected.

NFHS=Batter is out when he/she enters the box with an illegal bat.



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Jones comes to bat in the first inning and steps into the batter's box. It is then detected by the umpire that the pine tar extends past the handle on a non-wood bat.

- A. Jones shall be instructed to replace the bat.
- B. Jones shall be called out.
- C. Jones shall be called out and restricted to the dugout.
- D. Jones shall be called out and ejected.

NFHS Ruling: B





With his team trailing 4-3 in the top half of the seventh inning and two outs, Adams comes to bat. Before he steps into the batter's box, the Home Team coach points out to the umpire that pine tar extends beyond the bat handle.

- A. Bat is legal.
- B. Bat is illegal and should be replaced.
- C. This is illegal. The batter is out.

NFHS Ruling: B





4-4-1c FORFEITED GAME



- A game shall be forfeited to the offended team by the umpire when a team delays more than a reasonable amount of time in not obeying an umpire’s order to remove a player, coach or team personnel for violation of the rules.



FORFEITED GAME

4-4-1c

- ART. 1 . . .** A game shall be forfeited to the offended team by the umpire when a team:
- a. is late in appearing or in beginning play after the umpire calls "Play." State associations are authorized to specify the time frame and/or circumstance before a forfeit will be declared for a late arrival by one of the teams; or
 - b. refuses to continue play after the game has started; or
 - c. delays more than a reasonable amount of time in resuming play, or in not obeying the umpire's order to remove a player, coach or team personnel (3-3-2) for violation of the rules; or
 - d. persists in tactics designed to delay or shorten the game; or
 - e. willfully and persistently violates any of the rules after being warned by the umpire; or...



FORFEITED GAME

4-4-1c

Rationale:

Clarification. Forfeiture is the result when a coach, player or team personnel does not conform to the instructions of the umpire. An ejection is a serious violation of sportsmanship and game decorum. To aggravate the violation with a game forfeiture is egregious and contrary to the basic premise of education-based athletics.



NJSIAA POSITION

No Official in any sport may forfeit a game for any reason.

Officials must complete Termination of Game form on NJSIAA website.

Only NJSIAA and/or Conferences may award a forfeit.



A coach from Team A is ejected for violation of the rules and refuses to leave the vicinity of the playing area immediately.

- A. The game will remain suspended until the coach is escorted outside the vicinity of the field.
- B. The game will be suspended immediately, and the state association will determine if the game is resumed or forfeited.
- C. The game should be forfeited to the opposing team if the refusal to leave causes a delay in resumption of play.

NFHS RULING: C The umpire(s) shall use good judgment and allow a reasonable time before forfeiting.





The coach has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct. Later in the game, the coach's pitcher complains of a sore arm. The coach returns from the parking lot.

- A. This is legal.
- B. This is illegal.

NFHS RULING: B Umpire(s) must request the return of the coach; coach may not return on his own. Good judgment is required by umpire(s) in this instance.





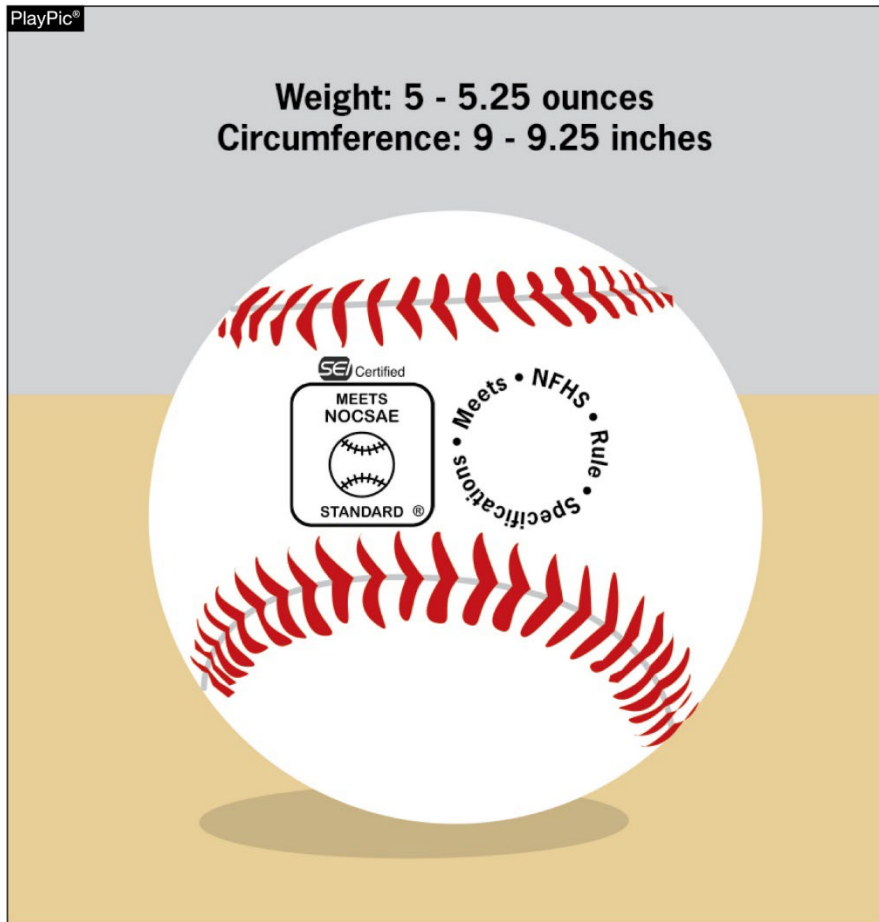
Points of Emphasis

2025 NFHS BASEBALL



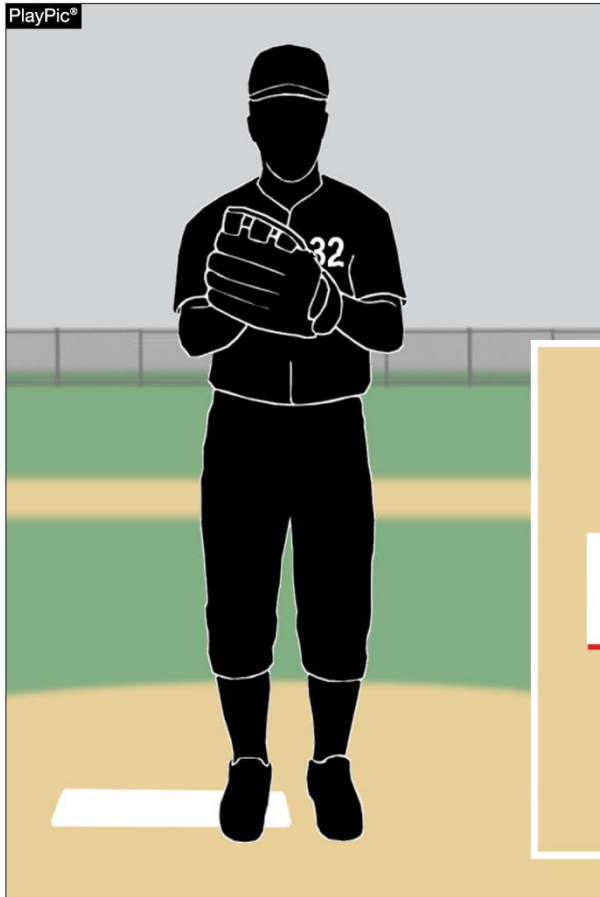
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USE OF AUTHENTICATED MARK PROGRAM BALLS

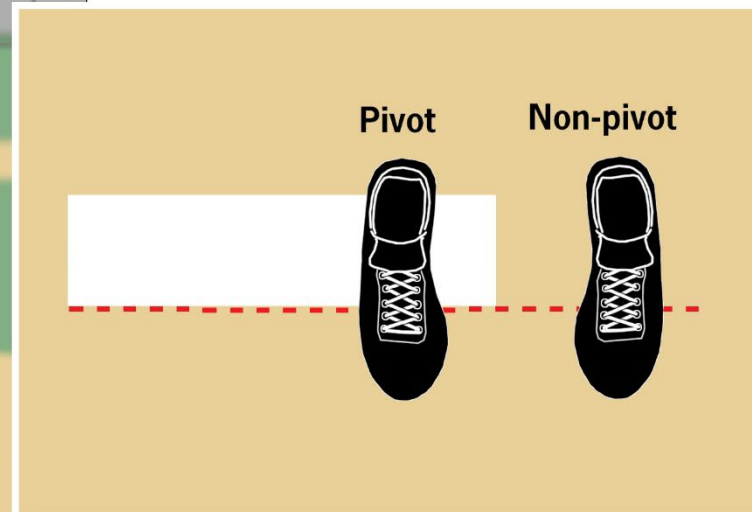


- The use of baseballs that have the Authenticated Mark printed on validates that the baseball meets NFHS rules specifications.
- This program helps promote a level playing field by ensuring consistency in the equipment being used. Conforming equipment is essential to the integrity of contests played under NFHS rules.

PITCHING POSITIONS



- Pitchers are required to use one of two positions: the wind-up or the set.

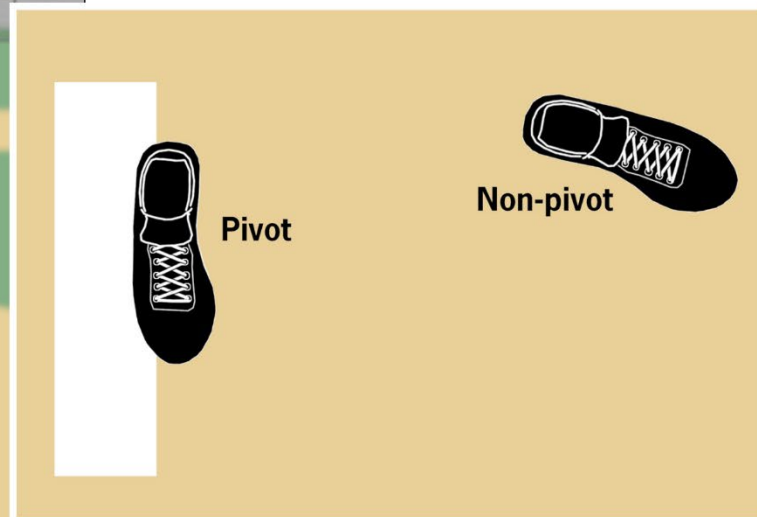


- In the wind-up, the pitcher's pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and not parallel to it.

PITCHING POSITIONS



- The position of the pivot foot determines which of the pitching positions is being used.



- In the set position, the pivot foot is in contact with or directly in front of and parallel to the pitcher's plate.
- It is important that umpires, coaches and players know what position the pitcher is using so they know which part of Rule 6 is in play.



BENCH DECORUM



- Coaches set the tone at athletic contests with their display of sportsmanship and respect.
- If coaches act in a positive sportsmanlike manner, they model the appropriate behavior for the players/team personnel in their dugout/bench area. It also establishes a constructive, non-combative tone for players, spectators and others.



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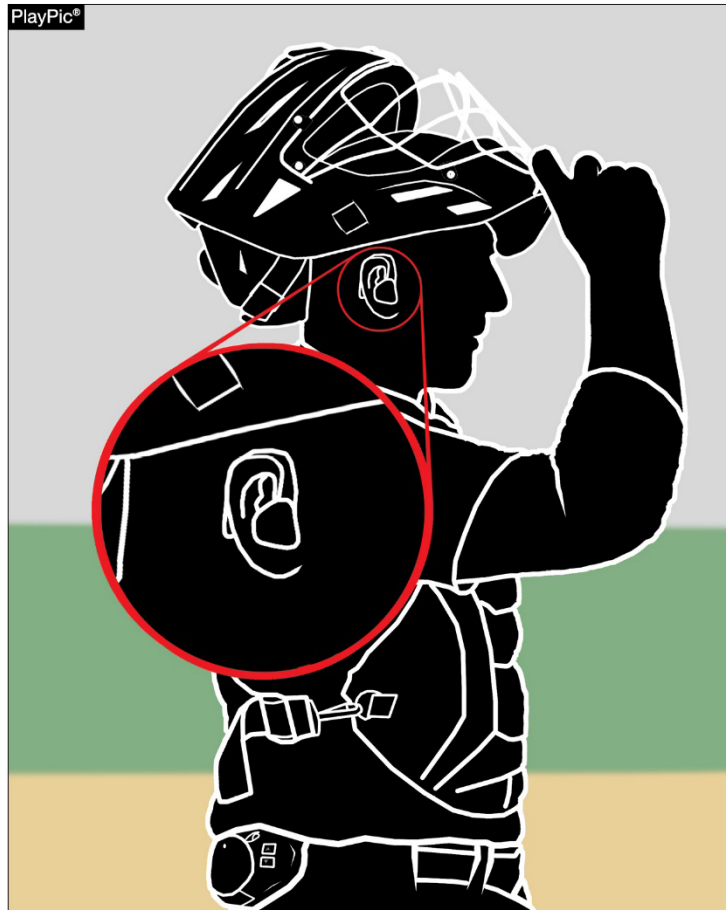
USE OF PROPS



- There is no logical purpose to have props at an education-based athletic event.
- The use of props or any items to demean or embarrass one's opponent is contrary to the ideas and expectations supported by the NFHS, who writes playing rules for high school-age and skilled students.



IMPROPER USE OF COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT



- The 2024 season was the first year of allowing one-way electronic communication devices from the dugout/bench to the catcher.
- Various technologies, ear-piece style, electronic bands or smart watches could be used, giving schools several options at various costs.



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IMPROPER USE OF COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT



- No other player except the catcher is legally allowed to wear or use an electronic communication device, and the coach is not allowed to communicate with any other player using electronic communication.



On Mon, Nov 25, 2024 at 10:21 AM Elliot Hopkins wrote:

Morning,

You have undoubtedly heard about the recent NCAA Baseball Experiment of in-game allowance for bat sensors. We have received several emails and questions about our position on these items. Our rules and position have not changed regarding this device. However, I wanted you to know what is going on and be prepared for some questions at home and as you travel. We will discuss more (if necessary) as a committee in June. Happy Thanksgiving!

Here is the link:

https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/championships/sports/baseball/rules/2025PRMBA_ExperimentalRules.pdf

Elliot



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NCAA BASEBALL EXPERIMENTAL RULES 2025 SEASON

The NCAA Baseball Rules Committee is interested in allowing institutions to experiment and provide data and feedback as it considers potential rules change in the future. Although this is a non-rules change year for baseball, the Baseball Rules Committee recommended two experimental rules, which were approved by the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel.

Any institution interested in experimenting must submit the request in writing Stanley Broaden (sbroaden@ncaa.org). Conferences granted permission to experiment are required to collect data and submit it to the rules committee at the end of the season. The experimental rules are approved for the 2025 season during conference play only. The experimental rules will not be used during the NCAA postseason.



1. Use of bat sensor technology for in-game data collection: To permit the use of metric sensors or data collection devices externally attached or embedded within the knob of the baseball bat for in-game collection of swing data. While data can be collected during the game, live access to the swing data will remain prohibited. Data collection will include the number of uses throughout the season (including during conference games and non-game scenarios), effectiveness of the technology, student-athlete experience and player development.



2. Use of in-game data/technology in the dugout during a game: To permit the use of electronic equipment (tablets) to access scouting and analytics information during the game in the dugout. (Note: Access to pitch location [i.e., balls/strikes] must be restricted during the game.) The following information must be provided for consideration of this experimental rule: (1) An outline of the conference's plan for use of the electronic equipment, (2) the type of equipment that will be provided or used, (3) details on the conference's policies/procedures to ensure appropriate use of the equipment and (4) details of implementing a device management feature to limit access of applications and metrics during a game. Data collection will include the number of uses throughout the conference season, effectiveness of the technology for the purposes of coaching and player development.





NJSIAA BASEBALL STATE TOURNAMENT

State Assignor:

Keith Hoffman

Assistant State Assignor:

Warren Bennett



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UMPIRE SELECTION

Assignors will use a variety of sources to assign games.

1. Use of information provided by Chapters.
2. Recommendations from Chapter and Independent assignors.
3. Observation of officials throughout the season.

Chapters need to provide good data. Provide what assignors request.





USE OF UMPIRES NOT IN GOOD STANDING WITH THEIR CHAPTER.

Chapter Secretaries need to be diligent in marking an umpire in Zebra Web as not in good standing if the chapter has taken disciplinary action.

If not identified, assignors will use.

Assignors are not interested in Chapter Politics.



FIRST 3 ROUNDS

Two man games

- Consideration is given to pairing up a veteran with a newer umpire.
- Assignors are not concerned with Chapter Affiliations.
- Geography and Distance are a factor in making assignments.



SECTIONAL FINALS AND BEYOND

Umpires must attend 3 man and 4 man training sessions.

These can be:

- Chapter training, or
- Assignor offered training.