



# 2020-21 NFHS SOFTBALL

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



## DP/FLEX



# COMPARING THE DP/FLEX TO OTHER LINEUP POSITIONS

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High School Associations

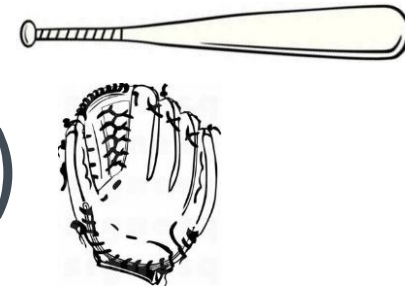


Take Part. Get Set For Life.®

## Visual representations of each player's "job"

## TYPICAL PLAYERS

- Usually each position in the lineup has a player that:
  - Plays Offense (bats and runs)
  - Plays Defense (uses their mitt)



## DP/FLEX SPLITS THESE TWO FUNCTIONS

- DP is the offensive specialist:
  - As long as the DP plays offense, they have not left the game (uses their bat)
- FLEX is the defensive specialist:
  - As long as the DP plays defense, they have not left the game (uses their mitt)







## VISUAL OF BAT AND MITT ONLY FOR TRAINING/UNDERSTANDING DP/FLEX

- The graphics of the bat and mitt are only to aid in understanding the DP/FLEX roles during this presentation:
  - Bat represents playing offense (batting and running)
  - Mitt represents playing defense
- It is not intended to imply that the DP must physically use the FLEX's mitt if playing defense for them
- Nor does it mean the FLEX has to use the same bat used by the DP if they play offense for the DP
- These graphics are not intended to be used, or marked on the actual lineup card during the game





# LOOKING AT THE DP/FLEX BY THE RULES

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## DP/FLEX RULE 3-3-6

- DP/FLEX Rule allows for more participation and flexibility in the game
- Gives coaches an option:
  - not to use the DP/FLEX at all, or
  - use the DP/FLEX option to its fullest extent

## DP/FLEX RULE 3-3-6

- The DP/FLEX does not have to be used.
- If used it must be noted on the starting lineup card.
- Once a team starts the game with the DP/FLEX on their lineup card, those **positions** are available for the entire game
  - As with all **players** they only have one reentry, but the **position** is always available for an eligible substitute to enter that **position**
  - There is no difference with the DP/FLEX **positions** they are available the entire game



## DP/FLEX RULE 3-3-6

- A team using the DP/FLEX starts the game with 10 players in the lineup but could end with 9 or 10 players in the lineup.
  - They would have 10 players if both the DP and FLEX positions have players active at the end of the game
  - There would only be 9 players if:
    - The DP is playing defense for the FLEX (FLEX has left the game)
    - FLEX is playing offense for the DP (DP has left the game)

# THE LINEUP CARD

- The DP is the offensive player (uses their bat) and must remain in same batting position for the entire game.
- The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (FLEX) will be placed in the No. 10 position in lineup and they will play defense (uses their mitt).

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		7
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		DP
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		9
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
6	C. SMITH			
55	D. BROWN			



## THE LINEUP CARD

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- The DP position always remains an option for use in the lineup, as long as there are eligible substitutes
- A starting or substitute DP may re-enter one time, as long as they return to the original position in the batting order



# SUBSTITUTING FOR THE DP

- The DP (player) may be replaced by:
  - Pinch-runner
    - DP (position) is still active
  - Pinch-hitter
    - DP (position) is still active
  - Substitute
    - DP (position) is still active
  - FLEX
    - DP (position) is no longer active
- In all cases, the DP (player) has left the game, with one re-entry permitted.



# SUBSTITUTING FOR THE DP

- Baker pinch runs for Cooper
- This is no different than a substitution for any other player/position in the lineup!
- Baker is now the DP playing offense (using the bat)

NO.		PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		7
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
<del>25</del>	7	<del>A. COOPER</del>		DP
4	SUB.	Baker		
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		9
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.			
NO.		SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10		S. HOWELL		
<del>4</del>		<del>B. BAKER</del>		
6		C. SMITH		
55		D. BROWN		

# THE FLEX MAY PLAY OFFENSE

- If the FLEX plays for the DP position

Drawing this arrow from the FLEX position up to the DP position leaves no doubt who is playing offense in the DP's position.

- If the lineup is down to nine

NO.		PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		7
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		DP
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		9
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.			
NO.		SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10		S. HOWELL		
4		B. BAKER		
6		C. SMITH		
55		D. BROWN		



# THE DP RE-ENTERS

- The DP (Cooper) enters to bat or run

Drawing this arrow shows that the FLEX went back to playing defense only.

- has never left the game (never gave up their mitt)

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		7
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
<del>25</del>	7	<del>A. COOPER</del>		DP
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		9
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
6	C. SMITH			
55	D. BROWN			



## WHY WOULD A COACH WANT TO DO THIS?

- Gives them the option to have the FLEX bat and the DP re-enter to run for them
- If the FLEX is no longer the pitcher or catcher later in the game
  - They could bat for the DP
  - Once on base the DP re-enters to run for them
  - When the 7<sup>th</sup> spot in the lineup is reached, the FLEX can again bat for the DP
  - Once on base an eligible substitute can be entered for the DP position and the FLEX goes back to defense only
  - This can be repeated as many times as there are eligible subs to enter the DP position to run for the FLEX
  - During all this time the FLEX never leaves the game (they continue to use their mitt)



## THE DP MAY PLAY DEFENSE

- The DP may play any defensive position, for any player
- If the DP plays defense for the FLEX, the FLEX has left the game (no longer using their mitt)
- If the DP plays defense for a player other than the FLEX, that player still bats and has not left the game

# THE DP PLAYING DEFENSE FOR THE FLEX

- Cooper begins to pitch (takes Green's mitt)
- Green has left the game (no longer using their mitt)
- Lineup is down to nine
- Green may re-enter once

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		7
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER	1	DP
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		9
	SUB.			
<del>18</del>	10	<del>M. GREEN (FLEX)</del>		<del>1</del>
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
6	C. SMITH			
55	D. BROWN			

# THE DP PLAYING DEFENSE NOT FOR THE FLEX



- Cooper plays second base and still bats No. 7 (takes Abel's mitt)
- Able no longer plays defense but still bats No. 2
- Able has not left the game

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		✓
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		7
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER	4	DP
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		9
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
6	C. SMITH			
55	D. BROWN			

## WHY WOULD A COACH WANT TO DO THIS?

- Allows them to rest a player that might be slightly injured without having to remove them from the game
  - a. If a runner slides into the second baseperson and she has a sore calf, the DP can play defense for her for an inning and let her ice down her calf
- Allows a player to warm up to enter as pitcher
  - a. If the backup pitcher is playing second base, the DP can play defense for them
  - b. That player can then warm up to be ready to enter as the pitcher without having to leave the game and use a reentry when they enter to pitch
  - c. After warming up they can become the pitcher and the DP can go back to playing offense only
- In both cases the slightly injured player, the DP and the player warming up have not had to leave the game





## ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION

- Since the DP and FLEX split the offensive and defensive jobs of one player, they are “tied together” or “linked” and the FLEX can only play offense for the DP
- The FLEX **may not** go into one of the first nine positions for someone other than the DP
- If they do, an illegal substitution results



## KEY POINTS

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- The DP/FLEX positions are never terminated
- A team may go from 10 to 9 players and back to 10 any number of times during the game, as long as they have eligible substitutes
- The game may end with 10 or 9 active players



## EASY REMINDERS

- The DP **can never** be on defense only:
  - If they don't play offense (use their bat) they have left the game
- The FLEX **can never** be on offense only:
  - If they don't play defense (use their mitt) they have left the game



## EASY REMINDERS

- The DP and the FLEX **can never** be on offense at the same time:
  - They are tied together and only one player can play offense in their (DP's) position in the lineup
- The DP and the FLEX **can** play defense at the same time;
  - FLEX can keep using their mitt and the DP can use someone else's





# **DP/FLEX RULE**

## **SAMPLE EXERCISES**



# SAMPLE LINEUP CARD

All samples will use this lineup card and progress through a series of substitutions

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
24	4	D. JONES		DP
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		7
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		1
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
6	C. SMITH			
55	D. BROWN			



## SAMPLE EXERCISE #1

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- Jones (DP) bats and gets on base safely
- The offensive coach asks for time to make a change
- “Green will run for Jones”

# SAMPLE EXERCISE #1

Green (FLEX)  
running for  
Jones (DP)

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
<del>24</del>	4	<del>D. JONES</del>		DP
	SUB.			
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		7
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		1
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
6	C. SMITH			
55	D. BROWN			



## **SAMPLE EXERCISE #1**

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Note –

Jones has left the game (no longer playing offense), they still have one re-entry. Green is now playing offense and defense.



## SAMPLE EXERCISE #2

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- Two innings later, Green singles to left
- The offensive coach asks for time to make a change
- "Smith is running for Green and Green will still be playing right field"

## SAMPLE EXERCISE #2

Note –

- This substitution is critical for the umpire to ensure they understand what the coach is requesting
- Coach says “Smith is running for Green” at this point there are two options:
  - Smith is substituting for Green and is the new FLEX playing offense in the DP’s position in the lineup. Change is made and recorded in the 10<sup>th</sup> position
  - Smith is substituting for Jones and is the new DP, Green is going back to playing defense only. Change is made and recorded in the 4<sup>th</sup> position.
- By actively listening and understanding the second part of the coach's statement “Green will still be playing right field” we know the coach wants option 2.



## SAMPLE EXERCISE #2

Smith (sub) running for Green (FLEX) is recorded as a sub for Jones and becomes the new DP

Green remains in the game playing right field only



NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
<del>24</del> 6	4	<del>D. JONES</del> Smith		DP DP
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		7
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		1
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
<del>6</del>	<del>C. SMITH</del>			
55	D. BROWN			

## **SAMPLE EXERCISE #2**

Note –

- Since Green will continue to play defense, Smith enters the game for the first time as the new DP
- Since Green (FLEX) is still playing defense they have NOT left the game (never quit using their mitt)



## SAMPLE EXERCISE #3

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- In the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, the offensive coach asks for time to make another change
- “Jones to re-enter and bat for Smith”

# SAMPLE EXERCISE #3

Jones (starting DP) re-enters for Smith

NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		8
	SUB.			
<del>24</del>	4	D. JONES		DP
	SUB.			DP
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		7
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		1
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
<del>6</del>	<del>C. SMITH</del>			
55	D. BROWN			



## SAMPLE EXERCISE #3

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Note –

- Jones has used her re-entry
- Smith has left the game and has a re-entry remaining
- This is no different than a substitution/re-entry anywhere else in the lineup



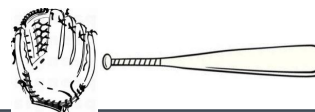
## SAMPLE EXERCISE #4

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- In the next half inning, the defensive coach asks for time to make another change
- “Jones will play defense in center field for Thomas”

## SAMPLE EXERCISE #4

Jones (DP) to  
play defense  
in center field  
for Thomas



NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		<del>8</del>
	SUB.			
<del>24</del>	4	D. JONES	8	DP
	SUB.			DP
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		7
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		1
	SUB.			
18	10	M. GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
<del>6</del>	<del>C. SMITH</del>			
55	D. BROWN			



## **SAMPLE EXERCISE #4**

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Note –

- Jones the DP is now playing offense (using their bat) and defense (using Thomas' mitt)
- Thomas still bats in the 3<sup>rd</sup> position in the lineup is playing offense only (still using their bat) and has NOT left the game



## SAMPLE EXERCISE #5

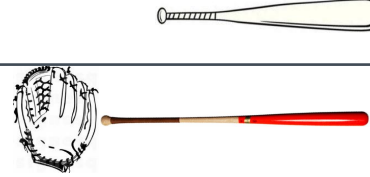
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- In the next inning, the defensive coach asks for time to make another change
- “Thomas is going back to playing center field, Jones will play defense in right field for Green”

## SAMPLE EXERCISE #5

Thomas goes back to  
center field

Jones (DP) to play  
defense in right field  
for Green (FLEX)



NO.	PLAYER		RE	POS.
19	1	B. HARRIS		6
	SUB.			
17	2	S. ABLE		4
	SUB.			
20	3	C. THOMAS		<del>8</del> 8
	SUB.			
<del>24</del> 6	4	<u>D. JONES</u> <del>Smith</del>	9 <del>8</del>	DP DP
15	5	R. ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.			
22	6	B. MOORE		2
	SUB.			
25	7	A. COOPER		7
	SUB.			
7	8	K. MORRIS		5
	SUB.			
3	9	E. RODGERS		1
	SUB.			
<del>18</del>	10	<del>M. GREEN (FLEX)</del>		<del>9</del>
	SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.	
10	S. HOWELL			
4	B. BAKER			
<del>6</del>	<del>C. SMITH</del>			
55	D. BROWN			

## **SAMPLE EXERCISE #5**

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Note –

- Jones (DP) is still playing offense and defense (now using the FLEX's mitt)
- Green (FLEX) has left the game (still has a re-entry) since she is not playing defense (no longer using their mitt)

# THANK YOU

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