

## 2025 Softball Rule Changes

**1-8-6** - Exception & Penalty - A high school coach will be able to use electronic devices in the dugout for **one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense**. The penalty from **Rule 3-6-11** was added to Rule 1-8-6 as well, with violators subject to ejection unless the offense is ruled to be of a minor nature.

**3-6-11** - This rule change specifies that **coaches are prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member while on offense** and the coach cannot use the device outside the dugout/bench area.

**9-3-2b** - When a base-runner is declared out for being hit by a fair batted ball, the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice in the scorebook.

## 2025 Points of Emphasis

Teams' Role in Pace of Play - Every effort should be made to educate players on the rules involved and the timing protocols related to breaks between innings, as well as during game play.

**Between innings, 60 seconds in provided for:**

- (a) The defense to take the field and throw warm-up pitches
- (b) The offense to prepare to bat

There are prescribed penalties associated with excessive time between innings. Once the allowed 60 seconds has passed, the offensive team has 10 seconds for its batter to enter the batter's box (Rule 7-3-1). Similarly, once the allowed 60 seconds has passed, the pitcher has 20 seconds to legally deliver a pitch (Rule 6-2-3). The respective penalties for violations of these time constraints are either a Strike or a Ball on the batter, depending on the tardy party. These same time constraints exist on each pitch thrown.

Once the ball is thrown back to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the pitch. Coaches who delay in calling pitches risk a penalty for exceeding the allowed 20 seconds. The same applies to the offense when the batter fails to enter the batter's box within 10 seconds after the ball is returned to the pitcher.

## Situational Awareness

Once the game has begun, only the batter, runner(s), on-deck batter, coaches in the coach's box, or bat shagger and nine defensive players are permitted to be outside the designated dugout/bench or designated warm-up areas. Additionally, during game play, hitting the ball to teammates on defense is prohibited. Between innings, bench personnel are permitted to engage in throwing and running activities.

**On-deck batters** should be mindful of potential foul balls and overthrows and be prepared to move as necessary to avoid contact. **On-deck batters must use the on-deck circle closest to their own dugout (Rule 7-5-1)**.

## Tournament Information

**Registration Information:** Teams DO not need to check-in. All items must be completed online to participate.

1. All rosters and waivers must be completed and parent/guardian must be accepted on your team's Tourney Machine Account by 5 pm 2 days before the event start date.

\*Parent emails MUST be entered on the online roster so that parents/guardians can read and approve. We will not accept coaches' emails.

2. Being submitted for all players - this will result in a coach's warning and possible forfeiture until corrected.
3. A copy of the team insurance policy needs to be uploaded onto your Tourney Machine Team account under the "MANAGE FILES" tab INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:
4. **Coaches:** By registering and participating in a D1-PROSPECT event, you are confirming your team is legally equipped and that all players and equipment comply with all D1-Prospect and NFHS rules.

### **Pitching Distance:**

10U - 35 feet

12U - 40 feet

14/16/18U - 43 feet

### **Refund/Weather and Cancellation Policy:**

D1 Prospects will make every effort to avoid cancellations of any kind. However, unforeseen circumstances may prevent an event from completing or, in some cases, starting such as (Weather and Acts of God). D1 Prospects, Partners, Directors, and Volunteers reserve the right to alter, change, or abbreviate the games and schedule when/if they deem it necessary to complete the event. Game Start Time: Games are considered "STARTED" once the Coin Flip or Plate meeting has been completed.

\*An **80% refund** will be given to teams that do not start any game(s) and the event is canceled.

\*A **50% refund** will be given in the event teams start 1 of their scheduled games and the event is canceled.

\***No refund** will be given to teams who started 2 or more of their scheduled games and the event is canceled.

\***No refund** will be given if a team; **forfeits, cannot, or chooses NOT** to complete the event due to any circumstance regardless of the number of games played.

### **Team Cancellation:**

\*A **90% refund** will be issued if a team withdraws/Cancels on or before the 30th day before the event \* unless noted on the event

\* A **75% refund** will be issued for teams who cancel between 14-30 days before the event.\*

\***No refund** shall be given for withdrawals within 14 days before the event start date or once the schedule has been completed. If a team is already listed on the schedule, that team will remain on the schedule and forfeit all games.

\***Notices must be received by 4 pm.** Any notifications received after 4 pm will be considered the following day.

**\*Showcase(s), College Expo's and Camp Events - THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS PAST REGISTRATION DEADLINE DATE.**

\*a \$50 minimum Admin fee or 20% of the entry fee whichever is greater will be charged on all registrations/Cancellations.

\*Credit Card fees, Processing fees, etc., will not be refunded and are collected from a third party.

**Late Fee:** A late fee of \$50 will be charged to any team whose entry fee is not paid in full by the registration deadline. Processing fees will not be refunded.

## Rules and Regulations

D1-Prospects has adopted the Official **National Federation of State High School (NFHS)** Associations Softball Rules ([www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)) with the following **exceptions**:

1. **FIELD OF PLAY:** If there are unusual conditions, such as spectators or obstacles too near the playing field, the Director or Umpire shall propose special ground rules. Ground Rules **shall not** supersede the rule book. All **Curfews will be honored** and may lead to adjustment of playing times **(Rule 1-1-9)**.
2. **EQUIPMENT:** Any bat may be used as long as it does not appear on the USA/USSSA Softball non-approved bat listing ([www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com)) and must bear (have) the 2000 ASA Certification, ASA/USSSA 2004 Certification, or USA Softball Certified or 2020 USSSA Certification Marks with the thumb 1.20 BPF print only stamp. **Illegal bats will result in the ejection of the player and the head coach from the game (Rule 1-5-1)**. All 14/16/18U players may wear metal cleats. All 12/10/8U are **NOT allowed to wear metal cleats**. It is the coach's responsibility to check and make sure that all players are properly equipped **(Rule 3-2-11)**.
3. **START TIMES:** Please be prepared 15 min. before the posted start time. **Any changes above 15 min. will be made by and communicated through the Event Directors through the Tourney Machine.** Once the umpire(s) are on the field and calls for a plate meeting, **all team warmup procedures must stop** and coaches must immediately proceed to the plate meeting. **TIME STARTS WITH THE COIN FLIP.** Umpires don't manage team game time, play until time expires. **(Rule 4-1-6)**
4. **HOME TEAM:** Will be decided by a Coin Flip in **Pool Play**, **Bracket Play** = Will be the **High Seed (may choose)**, but, if both are the same seed = A Coin Flip will be conducted. **Championship** - Undefeated Team is home team
5. **COACH:** Any time a coach is in the live ball area to confer with players or an umpire, or to occupy a coach box, the coach shall be attired in a Team uniform or jersey/coach shirt OR in team colors OR colors of khaki, black, white or gray. **Cut-off Jean Shorts are prohibited. Only closed-toed shoes must be worn on the field. (Rule 3-5-3)**
6. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** There is **ZERO tolerance** for disruptive behavior by fans, coaches, or players. Derogatory comments, poor behavior, and negative verbal communications toward any event staff, coach, or player will be cause for removal from the event and complex ie: **Taunting**, use of words or actions to incite or try to incite spectators to demonstrate.
  - a) use of profanity, intimidation or deceitful tactics, baiting or taunting, embarrassing, ridiculing or demeaning others in any circumstances including race, gender, religion or nationality. **(Rule 3-6-13)**
  - b) Behavior in any manner not in accordance with the spirit of play - team personnel **shall not** charge an umpire, **arguing balls and strike calls, or other umpire judgment calls. (Rule 3-6-14, 15)**

**Penalty** - The umpire **shall eject** the offender from the game, unless the offense is judged to be minor in nature. If the offense is minor, the umpire **may warn** the offender and **eject if the offense is repeated**. Coaches who are found to be in violation may be restricted to the bench/dugout for the remainder of the game or ejected from the game. Coaches, you will be held responsible for your fans' behavior.

\***Anyone** ejected from a game/facility **3 times in a rolling 6 month period** will receive a **6-month suspension** at the discretion of the D1 Prospects Board.

\***All Offenses:** All Warnings, Ejections, and Restrictions will be documented at each event. **Repeat Offenders will be subject to removals and suspensions** at the discretion of the D1 Prospects Board.

## **SPECTATORS ARE NEVER TO ADDRESS UMPIRES ON OR OFF THE FIELD**

\*Warnings issued to a team or fan will be documented and carried throughout the tournament. You will not get a warning per game. After 1 warning, a forfeit/ejection at the Directors/UIC's discretion can be enforced **(Rule 3-6-13)**.

**7. LINE-UP CARDS:** All Lineup Cards shall include the following; **Team Name, Coaches Name(s), Player's First initial and Last name, Jersey Number** (no players on the same team may wear identical numbers), **Position and Batting Order** of each starting player and eligible substitute **(Rule 3-1-3)**. Lineup cards will become official after they have been exchanged, verified, and accepted by the plate umpire during the pre-game conference. *Any changes made after becoming official to a player/substitute name or number or if a player/substitute is added to the line-up card will be considered the first offense and the umpire shall issue a team warning to the head coach of the team involved (Rule 3-1-3, Penalty).* Any further offenses *will result in the ejection of the head coach from the facility for the remainder of the tournament and the player(s) being called out.* **Only IF at the discretion of the umpire/director, it appears that these repeated offenses take away from the spirit and integrity of the game.**

**8. RE-ENTRY RULE:** Starters and any substitutes **may leave the game and re-enter one time** and in the same spot in the batting order as the person who replaced them. **(Rule 3-3-5)**

### **9. BATTING ORDER:** **(Rules 7-1-1, 2)**

- **Pool Play:** 10/12/14/16 & 18U - Teams may bat their whole lineup or **traditional Straight 9 lineup with substitutions** in all divisions with a free **defensive substitution**, but must keep the offensive integrity at all times. **Must declare pitcher, catcher, and substitutions (including courtesy runners).**

- **Bracket Play:** 10/12/14/16 & 18U: Same as pool play
- Bracket Play Games **will not start until all pool play games have been completed, scores entered and the bracket has been released.** We will NOT PREDICT seeding for brackets.

### **10. COURTESY RUNNERS:** Can be used for a Pitcher and/or Catcher only. **(Rule 9-9-1-6)**

- If a team is batting their entire lineup (more than 9), **any player not on base** can be a courtesy runner for the Pitcher or Catcher **only.** **If a courtesy runner is on base and their spot in the batting order comes up, they will be declared out at the plate.**
- If a team is NOT batting their entire lineup, the courtesy runner **MUST come from the substitutions listed on the line up card.**

No Courtesy Runner may run for both the Pitcher and Catcher in the same game.

**11. PLAYING SHORT HANDED:** **(Rules 4-3-1g and 7-4-1).** **This applies to 8/10/12U only:** A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled, provided they have a minimum of 8 batters present. **The vacant batting position will be designated as the absent player.** Whenever the absent player is scheduled to bat, **an out shall be declared.** A team may play short-handed under the following circumstances:

- A. A team may continue a game with one less batting position than listed in the starting batting order, **whenever a player leaves the game** (for any reason) **and no substitutes are available.** If a team falls below 8 batters, **a forfeited game shall be declared (Rule 4-3-1g).**

1. If the absent player is the batter or a runner, **an out shall be declared (Rule 7-4-1)** **EXCEPTION:** **If the absent player was injured while as EITHER a batter-runner or runner, the absent player may be replaced by the last completed at bat** to fulfill her base running responsibility. **However, this exception does not apply to any future at-bats.**

2. An absent player **may not return** to the lineup. **EXCEPTION:** A player who left under the Blood Rule may re-enter once treated and cleaned up (Rule 7-4-1).

- A. A team may begin the game short-handed. The absent player **must be listed in the ninth (9th) batting position**. Under no circumstances shall a team be allowed to have less than eight (8) players in the batting order.
- B. The team may not play short-handed **if an eligible substitute arrives**. Upon arrival, she must be inserted in the absent player's position in the batting order **immediately (Rule 3-3-8d)**.

A team may drop more than 1 batting position, (i.e., may have multiple absent players) **provided the lineup is maintained with at least 8 batters physically present**. All other restrictions above apply. If a team has multiple absent players and an eligible substitute arrives, **they must enter the game immediately in the first available absent player position** due up in the batting order.

**12. PITCHING:** Reference NFHS **Rules 2-47 and 6-1-2c**, When pushing off from the pitcher's plate, both feet may be disengaged from the playing surface (Leaping) as long as the remain within or partially within the 24-inch length of the plate **and do not create a replant of the pivot foot resulting in the pitcher being farther away from the pitcher's plate**. **When pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate resulting in the non-pivot foot becoming closer to home plate is illegal.**

**13. WARM UPS BETWEEN INNINGS** - All teams **will have between innings 1 minute (60 SECONDS)** to throw 5 pitches and be ready to bat at the end of the time frame. So, please have your players hustle between innings. **(Rule 7-3-1)**

#### **14. GAME LENGTH:**

**POOL PLAY** - For ages 10U through 18U all game times will be **75 minutes no new inning. May end with a tie.**

- **Events scheduled at 90 min will be as follows. 90 min no new inning. May end in a tie**

**BRACKET PLAY** - The **higher seeded team will have a choice** of being the home team and play **75 minutes or 7 innings** whichever comes first. **Must have a winner.**

**CHAMPIONSHIP GAME** - The **Undefeated team is the home team (no choice given)** and plays 7 innings or the time limit listed below for each age group, except 8U:

- Play **90 minutes** for 14U through 18U
- Play **80 minutes** for 12U
- Play **75 minutes** for 10U **\*\*60 Min for some events**
- Play **60 minutes** for 8U (Only)\*\*

**15. RUN RULES:** The game will be considered to be over, if one team is ahead by:

**12 runs** after 3,  
**10 runs** after 4,  
**8 runs** after 5 complete innings

These run rules **will apply in all phases** of Pool, Bracket, and Championship games. **In Pool play games only, we have included an additional run rule of 8 runs after 70 minutes and drop dead with either team ahead.**

- 90 min specific events will have an additional run rule of 8 runs after 85 minutes and drop dead with either team ahead

***\*In 8/10/12U divisions only, each team may score a maximum of 6 runs per half inning . After 6 runs have been scored, each team will exchange offense and defense sides. Only an over-the-fence homerun can score more than 6 runs in POOL PLAY ONLY.***

**16. TIE GAME:** In the event that time has expired, we will use the **International Tie Breaker (ITB) procedure, (Rule 4-2-6)** beginning in the top of the next inning, then move to progressive Tie Breaker if still tied. The last completed batter (LCB) from the previous inning will be placed on 2nd base as a base runner to start off the next half of the inning. If still tied after the first round of ITB, 2 runners will be placed on bases at 1st and 2nd base for the next round of ITB. **\*\*See 8u rules, TIE - Record-Head-Head, Runs Allowed, Run Diff, Runs Scored, Winn %.**

**17. SCORE:** Umpires will keep the official score on the field. They will check with each team's scorekeeper every half-inning for verification. The winning coach must sign/acknowledge the score and all game scores will stand as written. The scorebook of the home team shall be the official scorebook unless the plate umpire rules otherwise.

**18. PLAYERS, GUEST PLAYERS AND ILLEGAL PLAYERS:** - Each team must start the game with a minimum of eight or nine players and must have 8 players to continue play. **\*Any falsification of identity will be considered an Illegal player and will be ejected from the event (Rule 4-3-1g).**

**Guest Players** - Players not listed on the Online team roster are not eligible to play. Illegal players are grounds for forfeit/ejections **(Rule 3-4-1).** **NO REFUNDS for roster errors!** Rosters will be frozen at 5 pm the two days before the start of the event or as defined in the event notes. **\*The Director may grant an emergency guest player exception at their discretion.**

**Player Eligibility** - A player's age of eligibility is determined by their age as of August 31 of the prior year (ie; 08/31/2024). A player may always play up in age divisions, **but cannot** play below their eligible age division. However, Players who are more than 2 years younger than the age division **MUST** get Approval. **No player may play on more than one roster during the event.** It is the coach's responsibility to verify all athletes on their roster and to provide proof of age if asked to do so by the Event Staff. **\*See our website for NEW age eligibility requirements starting Sept 1, 2024. [www.d1-prospects.org](http://www.d1-prospects.org)**

**19. PROTESTS:** You may protest the application of a **RULE** or use of **Illegal Player only.** **Judgment calls** are Non-Protestable. Protests on a judgment call will not be allowed and no fee will be accepted. **All protests will require a \$100 on the spot Fee to be made out to D1 Prospects and will be settled by the protest committee.** The Protest Committee will be made up of any part of the following: Tournament Director, Tournament UIC, Site Director, or any of their designees. **If you win the protest the \$100 fee will be refunded.** If it is denied, the protest fee will be processed. **(Rule 1-1-9).**

- a. Coaches **shall immediately notify the plate umpire** of his/her intent to protest **before the next pitch.** If the game ends (legal contest) in a situation that can be protested, the **offended team must voice its intentions to protest** before the umpires exit the playing field.
- b. Protests made during a game will be decided immediately and before the game is allowed to continue.
- c. Protests on a rule or procedural interpretations must be made before the next pitch and will be decided immediately and before the game is allowed to continue. **The game clock will continue to run.**
- d. A protest on a **tournament procedure or player's eligibility** must be made before the umpires vacate the field of play of THE GAME IN QUESTION.
- e. **Illegal Player protest can be made at any time,** by the head coach of the offended team, while the player in question is in the game and before the umpires leave the playing field.
  - i. **If during discovery D1 determines there are other illegal players** on the team - the penalty will apply to all illegal players
  - ii. **Penalty - Ejection of both head coach and Illegal player** at the time of discovery.



1. **Head Coach is ejected from the Offending game.** However, may return to subsequent games **as a spectator only** and cannot coach the team in any way.

**16. FORMAT:** The **event games guaranteed** means that **your team will be scheduled for the number of games mentioned**. In instances where games may not be played due to a forfeit or other circumstance, your team will take the win and the other team a loss counting toward your game guarantee. **Forfeits will be recorded as a 7-0 score.**

**17. COVID-19:** Please share any venue-specific COVID-19 guidelines with your players, coaches, parents, and spectators. Each event location may have individual regulations, rules, and guidelines, and your participation in the event constitutes an agreement to abide by and follow all local, state, and event guidelines. Teams, players, and/or spectators may be removed for not following these guidelines.

### **Points:**

Non-Qualifier/National Events

Pool Games: 10 points per win, 1 point per loss, 4 points per tie

Bracket Games: 15 points per win, 3 points per lose

Bracket Semi-Final Games: 30 points per win, 12 points per lose

Bracket Championship Games: 50 points for a win, 20 points for loss

**\*Silver and Bronze brackets will only receive straight bracket points for their bracket - (15 for win, 3 for lose OR 30 for win and 6 for lose for Qualifiers)**

### **Qualifier & National Event Points:**

Pool Games: 20 points per win, 2 points per loss, 8 points per tie

Bracket Games: 30 points per win, 6 points per lose

Bracket Semi-Final Games: 60 points per win, 24 points per lose

Bracket Championship Games: 100 points per win, 40 pointers for loss

**Players Photos MUST BE ADDED to the roster for this event through your Tourney Team Account**

**EVENT DIRECTORS:** Our goal is to make this experience memorable. If you need assistance please feel free to contact us at [Register@d1-prospects.org](mailto:Register@d1-prospects.org)

### **Leadership and Contacts:**

- CEO - Shawna Weaver [register@d1-prospects.org](mailto:register@d1-prospects.org)
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