



NCTB BASEBALL: RULEBOOK

NCTB uses Major League Baseball rules with the following exceptions and modifications:

RULE 1 – THE PLAYING FIELD

- 1.01: (Chart 1):** The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

Age	Base	Pitching	Fence (lines)	Fence (CF)
8U	60'	40'	160'	185'
9U	65'	46'	180'	210'
10U	65'	46'	180'	210'
11U	70'	50'	230'	275'
12U	70'	50'	230'	275'
13U (54/80)	80'	54'	275'	300'
13U (60/90)	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
14U (60/90)	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
Scholastic	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'

- 1.02:** For details on field layout including recommended direction of play, fair and foul territory requirements, infield and outfield grades, pitcher's mound height and slope, batter's and catcher's box dimensions, and base and home plate size and construction should be referred to the Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on MLB.com.

RULE 2- EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

- 2.01** All bats for age divisions 14U (AA & AAA) and younger must be permanently stamped with a 1.15 BPF Mark, or BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood.

All bats for 14U Open, Major, and older must conform to the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) bat standards including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (3) ounces. These bats must be permanently stamped with the BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood.

- 2.02** **Altered Bat Director Inspection and Suspension:** A NCTB Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a NCTB sanctioned event or any other NCTB facility. The owner and / or user may either:

2.02-A Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two year suspension from NCTB sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or,

2.02-B Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered.

2.03 Worn / Abused / Damaged / Foreign Substance Bats Not Allowed in NCTB Sanctioned Play:

2.03-A No bat is legal for NCTB sanctioned play, if it is damaged in any way. Damaged bats include those with damage to the knob or end cap, those which have loose knobs or end caps, and those with cracks or dents in the bat material. For example, if the end cap is in any way loose or appears damaged, the bat should be removed from play for being a damaged bat.

2.04: In age divisions 8U – 12U, non-metal cleats shall be worn. In age divisions 13U and older, traditional metal baseball spikes shall be permitted.

2.05: The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup.
2.17-A: In age divisions 8U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

2.06: All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play.

2.07: Special Protective Gear: As a general rule, NCTB continues its policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate. Game conditions (temperature, equipment, rain, wind, visibility, field conditions, humidity, etc.) vary greatly from game to game and from field to field. In addition, the relative and absolute experience and skill levels of teams and players shall vary from player to player and from team to team. Thus, NCTB encourages players to utilize any protective equipment that they deem appropriate. Such protective gear shall be allowed in NCTB sanctioned play, unless by rule or by Director / Umpire ruling that such protective gear is disallowed as unsafe or as providing an unfair competitive advantage.

2.08: Bat / ball boys / girls under the age of eighteen (18) shall not be permitted.

2.09: The use of tobacco products are not allowed within the confines of the playing field and dugouts. Local facilities may have stricter policies prohibiting tobacco from facility and parking areas.

2.10: Alcoholic beverages are not allowed within the confines of the playing field or dugouts. Local facilities may have stricter policies prohibiting alcohol from facility and parking areas.

RULE 3- GAME PRELIMINARIES

3.01 A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game if not designated prior to play. The highest seeded team shall be the home team for bracket play games in single elimination brackets. In double elimination brackets, the highest seeded team shall be the home team until the championship game. In the championship game, the team in the winners bracket shall be the home team and a coin toss shall determine the home team for the "IF" game.

3.02 Time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.

3.03: Approved Team Line-ups:

3.03 A Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, ten (10) player line-up using an Extra Hitter (EH) or continuous lineup of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.

3.03 B If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order.

Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

3.03 C If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, shall be treated as such for substitution purposes.

3.03 D If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position. Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up. When using the continuous lineup and a player has to leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around.

3.03 E In 15u and Older Divisions, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) rules.

3.03 E(1) A Designated Hitter may be selected for any one starting player and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.

3.03 E(2) A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the DH in the starting line-up.

3.03 E(3) A DH for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the line-up.

3.03 E(4) Failure to declare a DH prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.

3.03 E(5) If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the DH is used, that player becomes the new DH.

3.03 E(6) The player who was the Designated Hitter may re-enter pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.02.D.1(a).

3.03 E(7) A Designated Hitter and the player for whom the DH is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that shall alter the batting order.

3.03 E(8) The role of the Designated Hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

3.03 E(8)a The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the DH batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;

3.03 E(8)b The DH or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.

3.03 F Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

3.03 G A team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players.

3.04 Starting and Ending a Game:

3.04 A A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 4U – 12U and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U and older, unless the game is:

3.04 A(1) Shortened because the home team doesn't need its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or

3.04 A(2) Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or

3.04 A(3) Shortened because any applicable part of NCTB run rules

3.04 B Extended because the score is tied after the completion of the regulation number of innings, in which case, play shall continue until the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.

3.04 C An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning. In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the start of the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

LENGTH OF GAME	RUN DIFFERENTIAL	START INNING
6 Innings	15	3rd Inning
6 Innings	8	4th Inning
7 Innings	15	3rd Inning
7 Innings	12	4th Inning
7 Innings	8	5th Inning

3.05 If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of nature and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:

3.05 A For a scheduled six (6) inning game, if three (3) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in two (2) innings or two and one half (2 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in three (3) complete innings, or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.

3.05 B If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond three (3) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by NCTB Rules shall be a suspended game.

3.06 For a scheduled seven (7) inning game, if four (4) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three and one half (3 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.

3.06 A If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by NCTB rules shall be a suspended game.

3.07 If a game is tied after regulation innings or when time limit expires, the following procedures will be implemented for extra innings. The teams will play one extra inning using the IBAF Tie-Breaker, which works as follows:

- Each team will begin the next inning (and any subsequent necessary extra innings in bracket play) with runners on first and second with no outs, starting with the visiting team, until a winner is determined.

- At the start of the Tie-Breaker, representatives from both teams will meet at home plate and will indicate (at the same time) to the home plate umpire where their team wishes to start in their existing lineup. Teams have the option of starting the Tie-Breaker anywhere in the lineup.

Note: This is not a new lineup and the order of names on the lineup card does not change, but teams may start at any point in that lineup. This is designed to ensure both teams have an equal chance at having what they consider their best hitters and base runners in a position to score. For example, if the team decides to have the #1 batter hit first, then the last two batters in the lineup would be placed on 1B and 2B; if the team decides to have the #3 batter hit first, the #1 batter would be placed on 2B and the #2 batter on 1B.

Once the players/runners are determined for the Tie-Breaker, the order of subsequent innings will be determined by how the previous inning ended. For example, if the 9th inning ends with the #6 batter having the last official at bat, then the 10th inning begins with the #7 batter at the plate, and the #5 batter on 2B and the #6 batter on 1B.

3.08 All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to NCTB rules shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, shall resume from the exact point of suspension.

RULE 4- BATTER, BATTER-RUNNER

4.01 An Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from either the pitcher or catcher without throwing pitches.

4.02 At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If no players not presently in the line-up are available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules (if available) shall be used without penalty.

4.03 Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and/or catcher. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and/or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact.

4.03-A Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

Rule 4.03-A Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected at the discretion of the Umpires.

RULE 5- THE PITCHER

5.01 **ONE DAY MAXIMUM TO PITCH THE NEXT DAY:** The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in one (1) day and still pitch the next day. In the 8U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of three (3) innings in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day. If the player pitches three and one-third (3 1/3) or more innings in one day, the player cannot legally pitch the next day.

5.01-A A player that pitches more than three (3) innings in one day **MUST** rest the next day.

- 5.02** In the 8U – 12U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of six (6) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to pitch the next day. Similarly, in the 13U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of seven (7) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to legally pitch the next day.
- 5.03 THREE DAY MAXIMUM:** The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in three (3) consecutive days. In the 8U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of eight (8) innings in three (3) consecutive days. This is to be interpreted as a player may legally pitch any combination of innings to equal eight (8) innings in two (2) days as long as the player doesn't pitch more than three (3) innings the first (1st) day. Similarly, as a player may legally pitch any combination of innings to equal eight (8) innings in three (3) days as long as the player doesn't pitch more than three (3) innings the first (1st) or second (2nd) days.
- 5.03-A** For all cumulative totals in this rule, one (1) out equals one-third (1/3) of an inning, two (2) outs equals two thirds (2/3) of an inning and three (3) outs equals one (1) full inning. A pitcher that pitches in a game and records no outs is not charged with any innings pitched.
- 5.03-B** A player that pitches eight (8) innings in two (2) consecutive days **MUST** rest the next day.
- 5.03-C** A player that pitches three (3) consecutive days (regardless of total quantity of innings pitched) **MUST** rest the next day.
- 5.03-D** Outs recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitcher's innings limit.
- 5.04** For purposes of pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the legal pitching limits pursuant to these rules.

Rule 5.04 Exception: Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play shall not be counted against the pitcher for the purpose of this rule but shall be counted towards the pitcher's limits with regards to the eligibility to pitch the next day.

- 5.05** It shall be the responsibility of each team manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire-in Chief and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records any out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game as the pitcher of record. If such violation is the last recorded out of the game, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the Umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. EndFragment

Pitching limits violation penalty: The Manager/Head Coach of the offending team shall be ejected from the game. The violating pitcher shall be ejected from the line-up, and no longer be allowed to participate in the game.

AGE DIVISION	ONE DAY MAXIMUM	ONE DAY TO	THREE DAY MAXIMUM
7U – 12U	3	6	8
13U – 14U	3	7	8
15u & Up	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited

- 5.06** The end of the day for the purpose of this rule shall be the time of day or night when the ballpark is shut down and the teams go home for the night break. Games that for any reason extend past midnight (12:00 AM) or start late at night, past midnight (12:00 AM) and are completed before the teams take the night break, shall count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break pursuant to NCTB rules shall be a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the portion of the game played prior to suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day and the outs recorded during the portion of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.
- 5.07** This rule limits the number of visits a manager or a coach may make to any pitcher in any one (1) inning:
- 5.07-A** A second (2nd) visit to the same pitcher in the same inning shall cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the pitching position;

5.07-B The manager or a coach is prohibited from making a second (2nd) visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, However, if a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or a coach may make a second (2nd) visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher.

5.08 A manager or a coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the eighteen (18) foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

5.09 A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the Umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected. If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to NCTB rules.

RULE 6 – PROTESTS

6.01 Umpires shall work to settle all situations on the field. Protests shall be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. If a call to be protested is the last recorded out of a game or on a game ending play, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the Umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. No protest shall be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials shall rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final.

6.02 The Protest fee shall be \$100.00 CASH. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld

6.03 Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game.