

NFHS BASEBALL RULES CHANGES FOR 2012

Rule 1-3-2d: As of January 1, 2012, all aluminum and composite bats must meet BBCOR standards. Prior to the June 2012 meeting of the Baseball Rules Committee, the NFHS will work with appropriate parties to research and develop a baseball bat tamper-evident protocol for non-wood bats and present the recommendations to the committee for its consideration. The goal for implementation is for non-wood bats manufactured after January 1, 2015.

Rule 1-3-5: No artificial or intentional means shall be used to control the temperature of the bat. This is based on scientific research that altering the bat damages the bat and poses an unnecessary risk of injury.

Rule 1-5-8: State associations may now authorize exceptions to NFHS rules to provide “reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs and unique and extenuating circumstances,” so long as they do not fundamentally interfere with the sport.

Rule 1-5-10: The Umpire-In-Chief is responsible for resolving any question or complaint regarding the legality of player equipment.

Rule 3-1-6: Players and coaches must clean or remove “any” (formerly “excessive”) amount of blood from a uniform or piece of equipment before being allowed back into the game.

Rule 3-3-1g7: If a Coach confronts an umpire or directs unsportsmanlike conduct toward umpires after a game has ended and after the umpires have departed the game site, the rules now call for state associations to determine appropriate action when dealing with these situations.

Rule 3-3-1q: This change clarifies where players should be located during a fight or physical confrontation.

Rule 4-1-3a-b: Prior to the start of each game, each Head Coach must now verify to the Umpire-In-Chief that all participants are legally equipped and that all equipment is in accordance with NFHS rules. Such rules include “compliant bats that are unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design and production and helmets that are free of cracks and damage.”

Rule 6-2-2c, Exception: The starting pitcher may warm up by using no more than eight throws, completed in one minute (timed from the first throw). This rule applies to relief pitchers as well. At the beginning of each subsequent inning, the pitcher may warm up with no more than five throws, completed in one minute (timed from the third out of the previous inning).

Rule 10-1-2: The game officials retain clerical authority over the contest through the completion of any reports, including those imposing disqualification, that are responsive to actions occurring while the umpires had jurisdiction. State associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents after the umpires' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a game is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play.

Rule 10-2-3: Umpires are no longer required to perform pregame equipment checks, as that responsibility will fall to coaches beginning in 2012. Coaches can still ask umpires at the pregame conference to confirm that equipment is compliant. "The committee is placing a great importance on increased coach responsibility," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee. "It is one of our top priorities."