



# 2020-21 NFHS SOFTBALL

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



Batting

# RULE 7-2-1 STRIKES, BALLS, AND HITS

A strike is charged to the batter when:

- a. a pitched ball enters any part of the strike zone in flight and the batter does not swing.
- b. a pitched ball is swung at and missed.
- c. a pitched ball becomes a foul when the batter has less than two strikes.
- d. a pitched ball becomes a foul tip (even on a third strike) or a foul from an attempted bunt (F.P.).
- e. a penalty strike is called because a batter delays. (7-3-1)
- f. a batted ball contacts the batter in the batter's box (foul ball).
- g. a pitched ball contacts the batter while swinging at the ball or the batter is hit by the pitch that is in the strike zone (dead-ball strike).
- h. a pitched ball, in the umpire's judgment, is prevented from entering the strike zone by any actions of the batter (dead-ball strike).
- i. when a member of the offensive team intentionally removes a line.



## RULE 7-2-2, 7-2-3 STRIKES, BALLS, AND HITS

- A ball is credited to the batter when a pitch is not touched by the bat and is not a strike, when there is an illegal pitch (6-1-1, 2), or for catcher's or pitcher's delay. (6-2-3, 6-3-2)

**EFFECT:** Any pitch that touches the plate shall be called a ball if the batter does not strike at it.

- A foul hit or fair hit, which may be a bunt in (F.P.), occurs when a pitch is touched by the bat of the batter who is in her box. (2-8, 2-20, 2-25)

**EXCEPTION:** Foul Tip.



## RULE 7-3-1 STRIKES, BALLS, AND HITS

A batter shall not delay the game by failing to promptly take her position in the batter's box within 10 seconds after the ball is returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, or by stepping out of the box when the pitcher is on the pitcher's plate.

**PENALTY:** If a pitcher has brought the hands together, the batter leaves the box at the risk of having a strike called while being out of position. For failure of the batter to be ready within 10 seconds after the ball has been returned to the pitcher, the umpire shall call a strike. If it is the third strike, the umpire shall call time and declare the batter out.



## RULE 7-3-1 STRIKES, BALLS, AND HITS (EFFECTS)

1. After entering the batter's box, the batter leaves it at the risk of being charged with delay. The batter may request time-out if she desires to step out for a valid reason and, if granted, the 10-second count will begin anew. The umpire is authorized to refuse to grant time-out if the batter repeatedly causes delay or if her leaving the batter's box appears to be an attempt to distract the pitcher or to gain some other advantage.
  
2. If the pitcher stops or hesitates in her delivery as a result of the batter stepping out of the box or holding up her hand to request time, it shall not be an illegal pitch. If a pitch is not delivered, a rule has been violated by both the batter and the pitcher. The umpire shall call time, declare "no-pitch" and begin play anew. If the umpire judges the batter's action to be a deliberate attempt to create an illegal pitch, the umpire will penalize according to 3-6-9. However, if the batter steps out of the box or holds up her hand to request time and the pitcher legally delivers the ball, it shall be called a strike and the ball remains live.



## RULE 7-3-2 STRIKES, BALLS, AND HITS

A pitched ball that is not entirely within the batter's box, not swung at nor called a strike, touches the batter or her clothing. If no attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch is made, the batter will not be awarded first base unless it is ball four. (8-1-2c)

**PENALTY:** If the batter made no attempt to avoid the pitch which is not entirely in the batter's box or she obviously tried to get hit by the pitch, the ball is dead. The pitch is a ball or strike depending on its location and the batter remains at bat unless it is strike three or ball four. Base runners advance only if forced.



# RULE 7-4-1, 7-4-2, 7-4-3

## Batter is Out

- A team is playing with one less than the starting number in the batting order and her turn to bat is reached.
- The batter enters the batter's box with an illegal bat or is discovered having used an illegal bat and the infraction is detected before the next legal or illegal pitch (only the umpire or defense may detect an illegal bat).

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead immediately. All runners not put out on the play must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. When the illegal bat is an altered or non-approved bat, the batter and head coach are also ejected.

**NOTE:** damaged bats are not illegal and are removed from the game without penalty.

- The batter disconcerts the pitcher by stepping out of the box on one side of home plate to the box on the other side while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead immediately.



## RULE 7-4-4, 7-4-5

- The batter interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by leaning over home plate, by stepping out of the batter's box, by making any movement which hinders action at home after the pitch reaches the catcher or the catcher's attempt to play on a runner, or by failing to make a reasonable effort to vacate congested area when there is a throw to home and there is time for the batter to move away.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead immediately. Runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference. (8-6-10)

- A third strike is caught. (7-2)



# RULE 7-4-6, 7-4-7 BATTER IS OUT

- (S.P.) A third strike (in flight) is not caught or a foul ball on the third strike is not caught.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead immediately.

- (F.P.) A third strike (in flight) is not caught, a runner occupies first base at the time of the pitch and there are less than two outs. (8-2-1)

**NOTE:** (F.P.) If there are two outs or if no runner occupies first base, the batter is not out unless the third strike is caught. The batter is entitled to try to reach first base before being tagged out or thrown out.



## RULE 7-4-8, 7-4-9, 7-4-10, 7-4-11 BATTER IS OUT

- The batter hits the ball fair or foul while either foot is touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or while touching the plate.
- (F.P.) A bunt on a third strike is foul.
- (S.P.) The batter bunts or chops the ball downward
- A foul (other than a foul tip, not a third strike) ball is caught in flight by a fielder or such catch is prevented by a spectator reaching into the playing area.



**PENALTY:** (Art. 8, 9, 10, 11) The ball is dead immediately. All runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

## RULE 7-4-12 BATTER IS OUT

- Offensive team members (excluding a runner or retired runner) shall not interfere with a fair batted ball or foul fly ball.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead immediately and the batter is out. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the interference prevented a possible double play, the batter and runner closest to home shall be declared out. Other runners shall be returned to the last base touched at the time of the interference. (3-5-6, 7-5-4, 8-6-16)



## RULE 7-4-13 BATTER IS OUT

- After hitting or bunting a ball, the bat hits the ball a second time while the ball is on or over fair territory, or is on or over foul territory and, in the umpire's judgment, had a chance to become a fair ball.

**EXCEPTION:** If the batter is in the batter's box and the bat is in the batter's hands when the second contact occurs, it is a foul ball regardless of whether the ball was on or over fair or foul territory unless, in the umpire's judgment, the batter intentionally hit the ball a second time.



## RULE 7-4-14 BATTER IS OUT

- The batter throws her bat and interferes with a defensive player attempting a play.

**NOTE:** If the bat breaks and a portion is hit by the ball or hits a runner or fielder, no infraction has occurred.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead immediately. Runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference. (8-6-10)



## RULE 7-5-1, 7-5-2, 7-5-3 ON-DECK BATTER

- The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of the on-deck circle closest to her dugout.
- The on-deck batter may warm up with no more than two official softball bats, an approved warm-up bat or a combination not to exceed two bats.
- The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle:
  - a. when she becomes a batter.
  - b. when directing a runner advancing from third base to home plate.



# RULE 7-5-4 ON-DECK BATTER

- The on-deck batter shall not commit interference with the defensive team.

## PENALTIES:

1. When the interference is with a thrown or pitched ball, the ball is dead and the runner closest to home is declared out. If no play is obvious, no player is out, but runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of interference.
2. When the interference is with a fair batted or foul fly ball, the batter is out. When, in the judgment of the umpire, the interference prevented a possible double play, the runner closest to home shall also be declared out. Other runners return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.



# THANK YOU

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