



The WBSC passed the following rule changes. The rule changes will now appear in the Reformatted Rules as shown. All changes apply to FP, MP and SP unless specifically noted otherwise.

1. Proposal R1, R20 and R24 – Rewording of one of the situations when an appeal may no longer be made – New wording is “All defensive players have left fair territory.”

Appears in reformatted rules (FP, MP and SP) in Rule 1.2.6

1.2.6 APPEAL PLAYS

On an appeal play, the runner will not be out unless the appeal is made legally.

- a) An appeal may be made while the ball is live or dead, but the defensive team loses the opportunity of making an appeal if it is not made:
 - i. before the next legal or illegal pitch, except for an illegal substitute, unannounced player, illegal re-entry, replacement or withdrawn player and runners switching bases;
 - ii. **before all defensive players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area. If a fielder makes the appeal, the fielder must be in the infield when making the appeal; and/or**
 - iii. in the case of the last play of the game, before the Umpires have left the field of play.

And 5.4.2 Effect

This is an appeal play that may be made by the manager, coach, or player of the defensive team only. **The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal for batting-out-of-order when all defensive players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout.**

And 5.10.4.1

- i.* when the defensive team does not request the Umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next legal or illegal pitch, or **until after all defensive players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout;**

2. Proposal R2 and R13 – Add that the consumption of alcohol and use of chewing tobacco is added to smoking as activities prohibited in the dugout area. Smoking to include the inhalation of tobacco products, e cigarettes and vaping.

Appears in reformatted rules as:

2.1.5 DUGOUT

The area in dead ball territory designated for team members only. There must be no smoking, **consumption of alcohol or use of chewing tobacco in this area. Smoking includes the inhalation of tobacco products, e cigarettes and vaping.**

And

3.5.1 IN GENERAL

- a) No team member may dispute any judgment decision by an Umpire.
- b) During a game, a person on the line-up card or otherwise permitted in the dugout must remain inside the designated dugout area, except when these Rules permit or when considered justified by an Umpire. This includes players other than the on-deck batter (who must remain in the on-deck circle) at the start of the game, between innings, or when a pitcher is warming up. There shall be no smoking, **consumption of alcohol or the use of chewing** tobacco in the designated area

3. Proposal R3 – Change to wording of “is placed into the batting order” to is entered into the batting order.

Appears in reformatted rules as

3.1.8 ILLEGAL RE-ENTRY

An Illegal Re-entry occurs when:

- a) **a player, including the DP and FLEX returns to the game in a position in the batting order to which they are not legally entitled, i.e., a position that is not their original starting position;** or
- b) a player returns to the game when they are not legally entitled to enter the game

4. Proposal R4 – Add definition of an illegal glove

Appears in reformatted rules as:

2.1.10 ILLEGAL GLOVE

A glove that does not meet the specifications of a legal glove or the use of a mitt by a fielder other than a catcher or first baseman.

5. Proposal R5, R17 R18 and R23 Infield Fly clarification and relocation

Appears in reformatted rules as;

5.5.2 a) v
EFFECTS

<u>Rule 5.5.2 a) v</u>	<u>An infield fly is declared</u>
<u>Effect</u>	<p><u>The ball is live and a runner may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If a declared infield fly becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul ball.</u></p> <p><u>If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.</u></p> <p><u>If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.</u></p>

AND
Appendix 5 Umpires

The plate Umpire or base Umpire will have equal authority to

5. Determine and call an infield fly. **When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the Umpire will immediately declare, "INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR-THE BATTER IS OUT," for the benefit of the runners**

6. Proposal R6 – Add when a spectator enters the playing field to the definition of Interference

Appears in the reformatted rules as:

5.1.30 INTERFERENCE

The act of:

d) a spectator who **enters** or reaches into the playing field and impedes a fielder playing the ball, or makes contact with the ball that a fielder is attempting a play on.

7. Proposal R7 – Change the definition of the strike zone.

Appears in the reformatted rules as;

5.1.41 STRIKE ZONE

The space over any part of home plate between the **bottom of the batter's sternum (chest plate) and the bottom of the batter's knee cap, when they assume their natural batting stance. (MP Only – The space over home plate between the batter's armpits and** the top of the knees when they assume their natural batting stance.) **The natural batting stance is the stance the batter takes after the release of the pitch when deciding to swing or not swing at the pitch.**

8. Proposal R8 – Slow Pitch only – Delete 2. He stands on the foul portion of the base, while the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle"

Appears in Slow Pitch reformatted rules as:

5.6 Double Base

iv) **Once a runner returns to the fair portion, should they then stand on the foul portion only it is considered not in contact with the base and the runner will be called out if they are tagged with the ball.**

9. Proposal R9 – Caps are no longer mandatory for coaches

Appears in reformatted rules as:

2.6 COACHES' UNIFORMS

A Coach must be neatly attired, including the wearing of suitable footwear, or be dressed in team uniform in accordance with the color code of the team. **If a coach choses to wear a cap, it must conform to Rule 2.5.1a).**

10. Proposal R10 – Delete wording regarding use of starting player as a replacement player.

Appears in reformatted rules as:

3.2.6 THE REPLACEMENT PLAYER

e) A Replacement Player may be:

- i. a listed substitute who has not yet been in the game;
- ii. a listed substitute who has been in the game but subsequently substituted from the game; or
- iii. a starting player who is no longer in the line-up and who is no longer eligible to re-enter the game.**

11. Proposal R14 and R15 – Change Fast Pitch Only – Allow Pitcher to only have contact with pivot foot

Appears in reformatted rules as:

4.3.1 PRELIMINARY ACTION BEFORE DELIVERING A PITCH

Before delivering a pitch, the following actions must occur.

- a) All players must be positioned in fair territory and the catcher must be in the catcher's box and in a position to receive the pitch.
- b) The pitcher must have possession of the ball and be on or near the pitching plate.
- c) The pitcher must have **the pivot foot** in contact with the pitcher's plate **and both feet** within the 61.0 cm (24 in) length of the pitcher's plate. The hips must be in line with first and third bases. (MP only – The pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate and within the 61.0 cm (24 in) length of the pitchers plate. The shoulders must be in a line with first and third bases).

- d) The pitcher must take, or appear to take, a signal from the catcher while standing on the plate with the hands separated and the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand.
- e) The pitcher must, after taking the signal, bring their whole body to a full and complete stop with the ball in both hands in front of the body. **The non-pivot foot (the stepping foot) must be stationary at the start and during pause. The non-pivot foot can only move forward with the start of the pitch. Any backward movement of the non-pivot foot during or after the pause is an illegal action.** This position must be held for not less than two (2) seconds and not more than five (5) seconds before releasing the ball. (MP only – This position must be held for not less than two (2) seconds and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball) (FP ONLY - Holding the ball in both hands to the side of the body is considered in front of the body.)

4.3.2 STARTING THE PITCH

- a) The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the pitcher’s wind up). The pitcher may not use a pitching motion in which, after being in the pitching position with the ball in both hands, they take a backward and forward swing and return the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- b) **The pivot foot** must remain in contact with the pitcher’s plate prior to the start of the pitch. Lifting the pivot foot off the pitcher’s plate and returning it to the plate, creating a rocking motion is an illegal act. (MP Only Both feet must remain in contact with the pitcher’s plate prior to the start of the pitch. Lifting the pivot foot off the pitcher’s plate and returning it to the plate, creating a rocking motion is an illegal act.)

12. Proposal R16 – Amend Strike Zone FP Only

Appears in reformatted rules as:

5.4.3

- c)** A strike is called the ball is live and runners may advance with liability to be put out:
 - i.** when any part of a pitched ball enters the strike zone before touching the ground and the batter does not swing, **(FP Only - Provided the top of the ball is at or below the sternum or the bottom of the ball is at or above the bottom of the knee cap);**

13. Proposal R21 Include under runner is out, when a runner interferes with a fielder throwing a ball”

Appears in reformatted rules as:

5.10.3

- c) A runner is out, the ball is dead and other runners must return to the last base legally held at the time of the interference, blocked ball or the out declared, unless forced to advance because the batter became a batter-runner when:
 - i. they are struck with an untouched fair-batted ball in fair territory while off base and, in the Umpire's judgment, any fielder had an opportunity to make an out;
 - ii. they intentionally kick a ball that a fielder has missed;
 - iii.** they interfere with a fielder attempting to field a fair batted ball, regardless of whether the ball has been first touched by another fielder, including the pitcher **or interferes with a fielder throwing a ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.**

14. Proposal R25 Slow Pitch Only – Allows Female slow pitch players to wear shorts or long pants in same sex competition and in Co-Ed competition regardless of what male players may be wearing in Co-ed team

Appears in Slow Pitch reformatted rules as:

2.5.1 PLAYER UNIFORMS

All players on a team must wear uniforms alike in color, trim, and style. **Female players in single-sex competition may wear all shorts or all long pants. Female players in co-ed competition may wear all shorts or all long pants, regardless of male player's pant style.** A team member in uniform may, for religious reasons, wear a specific head covering and apparel that does not conform to these Rules without penalty

15. Proposal R26 – Slow Pitch Only - Allows female players the option to play with the 11" ball with COR of .520 or under and a ball with compression of 300.0 or under.

Appears in slow pitch reformatted rules as:

2.3.3 OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

- a) Only an official softball that meets the standards of the WBSC Equipment Standards Commission and is stamped with the WBSC or ISF Equipment

Standards Commission adopted and approved marking must be used in a WBSC Competition. See Appendix 3 (for approved ball standards).

b) In Co-ed play, male batters will be pitched to with the 12" ball and female batters with the 11" ball.

c) **Female players may play with the 11" ball with COR .520 or under and a ball compression of 300.0 or under.**