

2024 SOFTBALL ADAPTATIONS

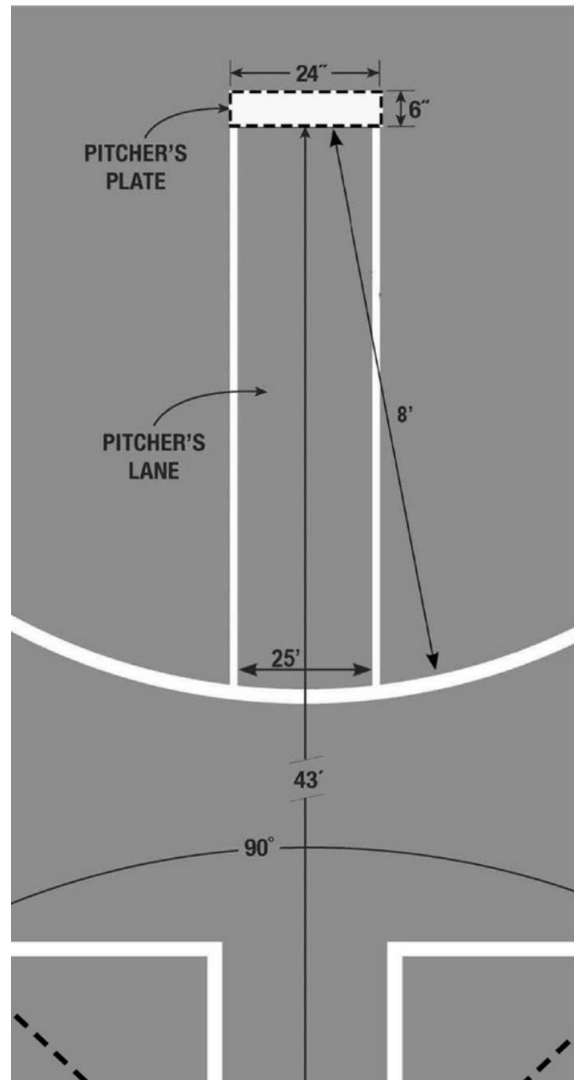
The 2024 National Federation Softball Rules Book will be followed, subject to the following adaptations:

A coach may use a one-way electronic communication device to communicate to the catcher for the purpose of calling pitches. Coaches may not use an electronic communication device(s) to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member on offense. The coach cannot be outside the dugout/bench area when using the electronic communication device.

Penalty: The umpire shall issue a team warning to the coach involved and the next offender(s) of that team will be ejected along with the head coach.

The devices are ONLY to be used to call pitches. No other instructions to the catcher may be given.

Pitching chutes will be chalked in the pitchers' circle. Beginning this season, a pitching chute will be chalked in the pitcher's circle before every game. It is difficult for umpires to call illegal pitches. A chalk-drawn chute will aid in the enforcement of legal pitching and help umpires to accurately call illegal pitches better. The attached diagram shows how the chute should be chalked.



LEGAL BATS - Rule 1-5 regarding bats will be followed with the following modification to 1-5-1d:

Bats must meet the 2004 USA Softball Bat Performance Standard, bear the 2004 certification mark, and not be listed on the USA Softball non-approved bat list. Bats made entirely of wood are permitted and need not bear a USA Softball mark. Bats bearing the newer USA Softball Certified mark are legal. Bats with the 2000 certification mark are ILLEGAL. Here is a link to the most current list of bats:

<https://www.ighsau.org/upl/downloads/content-blocks/approved-bat-updated-12-2023.pdf>



EYE BLACK AND MARKINGS - If eye black is used, it may only be worn in a straight line under the eye. No swoops or decorations are to be done with the eye black. If a pitcher is wearing something on her face that the umpire deems distracting, then she would be asked to remove it or not be able to pitch.

FENCE COVERING - Any fence that is less than six feet high and made of metal/steel shall be covered with a protective covering. This includes all fences on the diamond. There is no specific color required.

UNIFORMS - We will follow Rule 3-2 regarding uniforms with the following exceptions:

- There shall be no advertising or sponsor's name on the uniform. If worn, headbands may be any color or multi-colored and do not have to match among teammates. Headbands may have only a single manufacturer's logo on them.

PRE-GAME INFIELD - VARSITY ONLY - For regular-season dual competition and regional tournament, both teams may take infield practice on the actual playing diamond. There is a seven-minute limit. The timing shall be done by the home management - preferably by the PA Announcer or scoreboard operator. A reminder shall be issued with one minute remaining. A team still has the option of hitting ground balls in front of its dugout in foul territory during the seven-minute warm-up time if they prefer. But both teams must be allowed to use the playing diamond for their seven minutes if they choose. Regular season tournaments and sub-varsity warm-up protocol remain at the discretion of the home management.

UMPIRE ATTIRE - A powder blue polo shirt and grey slacks are REQUIRED for varsity contests. A white polo shirt (including those with the blue or red side panels) and grey slacks may be worn for sub-varsity games. Grey slacks and a powder blue polo shirt with the IGHS AU logo are REQUIRED to be worn in the regional and state tournament. Navy blue shirts may be worn for regular season ONLY if both umpires agree.

GAME-ENDING PROTOCOL – At the varsity level, it is **required** to use a 12-run differential rule after 3 or 4 innings (2.5 or 3.5 innings if the home team is leading by 12 or more runs) and a 10-run differential rule after 5 or 6 innings (4.5 or 5.5 innings if the home team is leading by ten or more runs). At the sub-varsity level, the use of the run differential rule is optional. Note: All regular-season games must be **legal** games, per NFHS rules. This includes any games played in tournaments. Schools hosting tournaments should provide written communication on the game-ending procedures for the tournament, particularly when there is a time limit or weather delays to all teams.

Those procedures should also be shared with umpires and discussed at the pre-game conference with coaches during the tournament.

INTERNATIONAL TIE-BREAKER - When used in a regular-season game, the international tie-breaker rule starts at the top of the 8th inning. To apply the rule, determine the first legal batter of the inning and then place the player immediately preceding her in the line-up on second base with no outs. If used during a regular- season tournament, it is permissible to begin using the international tie-breaker rule before the 8th inning if the time limit has expired.

SUSPENDED GAME - Apply Rule 4-2-1, 2 to determine if you have a regulation game with a winner decided. If not, the game shall be suspended, and if made up later, the game shall be resumed from the point of interruption.

PROTESTED GAMES – Rule 4-4 – The IGHS AU does not recognize protests.

