

USA SOFTBALL™

2020 USA Softball Rule Changes with Comments as of November 15, 2019

NOTE: All changes below are EFFECTIVE January 1, 2020 unless otherwise noted.

Rule 3. Section 1A [1]: The official bat must bear either the ASA 2000, ASA 2004, ASA 2013 or the new approved USA Softball Certification Marks.

Comment: Adds two additional USA Softball Certification Marks to the list of Certification Marks allowed on approved bats.

Rule 3. Section 3A: The official softball must bear either the ASA Certification Marks, or the new USA Softball Certification Marks allowed on approved softballs.

Comment: Adds USA Softball Certification Marks to the list of approved Certification Marks allowed on softballs.

Rule 3. Section 5E: Helmets shall have a non-glare (not mirror-like) surface.

Comment: Specifies that helmets cannot have a surface that has a mirror-like finish.

Rule 6A. Section 1C: Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases. The pitcher shall take a position with their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and their non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate.

Comment: Allows female pitchers to start with one or two feet on the pitcher's plate. This aligns the male and female pitching rule as it relates to foot placement.

Rule 6A. Section 1E: The pitcher shall bring their hands together for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneous with or after the hands are brought together. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step.

Comment: Allows female pitchers to take a backward step from the pitcher's plate, before, during or after the hands are brought together. This aligns the male and female pitching rule as it relates to stepping back from the pitcher's plate.

Rule 6A. Section 11B&C. Rule 7. Section 5D: (Junior Olympic Fast Pitch Only) Eliminates the penalty of advancing a runner one base without liability to be put out from the effect of committing an illegal pitch.

Comment: In Junior Olympic Fast Pitch **ONLY**, when an illegal pitch is declared, the penalty is only a ball on the batter. We no longer advance runners in Junior Olympic Fast Pitch as part of the penalty.

Rule 7. Section 6C: Add Effect: 5. All other runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

Comment: Aligns the penalty for Altered and Non-Approved bats with the penalty for an Illegal bat. Better defines where runners who are not out should be placed.