



2020-21 NFHS SOFTBALL

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Dead Ball and Suspension of Play



RULE 5-1-1a, 5-1-1b, 5-1-1c, 5-1-1d

Dead Ball

Ball becomes dead immediately when (see Table 5-1):

- a. a pitch touches a batter or the batter's clothing (8-1-2b).

NOTE: (F.P.) The ball becomes dead even though the batter strikes at it.

- b. the ball is illegally batted (7-4-8 and 7-4-2) or comes in contact with the bat a second time (7-4-13).
- c. the batter enters the batter's box with an illegal bat.
- d. any batted ball, while on or over foul ground,
 - 1. touches any object other than the ground or any person other than a fielder;
 - 2. goes directly from the bat to the catcher's protector, mask or person without first touching the catcher's glove or hand; or
 - 3. becomes an uncaught ball.





RULE 5-1-1e, 5-1-1f

Dead Ball

- e. there is interference by a runner or a retired runner (7-4-4; 8-1-2a; 8-2-5, 6; 8-6-10; 11, 12, 14,18) or by any person (3-5-4, 5; 8-6-16);

- f. a fair batted ball, which is on or over fair ground,
 - 1. touches a runner or an umpire before touching any fielder and before passing any fielder other than the pitcher (8-1-2a; 8-4-1f; 8-6-11);
 - 2. touches a runner after passing through or by a fielder and another fielder could have made an out;
 - 3. touches a spectator; or
 - 4. goes over, through or wedges in the field fence.





RULE 5-1-1g, 5-1-1h

Dead Ball

- g. a pitch or any other thrown ball;
 - 1. is touched by a spectator;
 - 2. is touched by nonparticipating team personnel;
 - 3. goes into a stand or players' bench (even if it rebounds to the field);
 - 4. goes over or through or wedges in the field fence (8-4-3c, g);
or
 - 5. lodges in an umpire's equipment, or touches loose equipment (1-8-3, 8-4-3k, 8-6-15, 2-2-3).

- h. the umpire handles a live ball, calls "Time" for inspecting the ball, or for any other reason, including items in 5-2.





RULE 5-1-1i, NOTES a,b

Dead Ball

- i. a fielder, after catching a fair or foul batted ball (fly or line drive), leaves the field of play by stepping with one foot or by falling into a designated dead ball area (i.e., bench, dugout, stand/bleacher, etc.).

NOTE: If a chalk line or imaginary line is used to determine dead-ball (out-of-play) territory, the line is considered in play.

- a. If the fielder's feet are touching the line or are in live-ball territory, she is considered in the field of play and legally may field, catch or throw the ball without penalty.
- b. If the player's entire foot (no part of the foot is touching in live-ball territory) is beyond the line and touches dead-ball territory at the time she catches, fields or throws the ball, she has entered dead-ball territory, the ball is dead, no play is allowed.





RULE 5-1-1i NOTE c,d

Dead Ball

- c. If a fielder has one foot in play and the other foot in the air, she legally may catch, field or throw the ball unless her entire foot contacts the ground in dead- ball territory, at which time the ball becomes dead, no play is allowed, and the penalty is applied.

- d. If a fielder contacts dead-ball territory with any part of the body except the foot, she is considered out of play. No play is allowed, and the penalty is applied. When the fielder completely leaves and then reestablishes herself within live ball territory (both feet in live-ball territory), a catch would be allowed.





RULE 5-1-1j, 5-1-1k, 5-1-1l

Dead Ball

- j. any personnel connected with the offensive team requests “Time” or uses any other command or commits an act for the purpose of trying to cause the opposing pitcher to commit an illegal pitch.
- k. after each strike or ball, as soon as a pitch touches the ground (S.P. only), or when an intentional base on balls is awarded. (S.P. and F.P.)
- l. an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly, fair line drive or fair bunt in flight with at least first base occupied and with less than two outs.



EXCEPTION: Infield fly rule. (8-2-9)



RULE 5-1-1m, 5-1-1n, 5-1-1o, 5-1-1p

Dead Ball

- m. a runner interferes with a fielder attempting to catch a foul fly.
- n. the batter-runner steps backward toward home plate to avoid or delay being tagged out.
- o. an illegal pitch occurs, but no pitch is delivered to the batter.
- p. there is interference by a batter (7-4-4 Penalty).





RULE 5-1-2

Delayed Dead Ball

It is a delayed dead ball when (see Table 5-1):

- a. an illegal pitch is delivered.
- b. a catcher or any fielder obstructs a batter or obstructs the ball through use of detached player equipment. (8-1-1d, 8-4-3b, 8-4-3d)
- c. the umpire interferes (F.P.) with a catcher who is attempting to throw a non-batted ball.
- d. a ball touches an illegal glove/mitt.
- e. anyone who is required to wear a batting helmet deliberately removes the helmet while the ball is live.





RULE 5-1-3 & 5-1-4

Art. 3 The ball becomes dead when time is taken to make an award when a catcher or any fielder illegally obstructs a runner. (8-4-3b PENALTY)

Art. 4 After a dead-ball situation, the ball becomes live when the umpire calls and/or signals "Play Ball."



DEAD BALL TABLE 1

BALL DEAD IMMEDIATELY		TABLE 5-1 DEAD-BALL TABLES		
Activity	References	Awards or Penalties	References	
1. Pitch touches batter (F.P.).	5-1-1a	Batter awarded first base except when no effort to avoid pitch is required.	8-1-2b, c; 7-3-2	
2. Illegally batted ball.	5-1-1b	Batter is out. Runners return.	7-4-8, 7-4-2	
3. Ball hit twice in fair and sometimes foul territory.	5-1-1b	Batter is out. Runners return.	7-4-13, 8-2-6	
4. Uncaught foul.	5-1-1d(3)	Runners return to bases occupied at time of pitch.	8-3-2 EXC.	
5. Spectator interference.	5-1-1d, f, g	Umpire judgment in awarding bases or imposing penalty to nullify interference.	8-4-3j	
6. Interference by runner.	5-1-1e	Interferer is out. Other runners return to base occupied at time of infraction.	8-6-10	
7. Interference by retired runner.	5-1-1e	Runner closest to home is out. Other runners return.	8-6-16c	
8. Interference by runner (foul fly).	5-1-1m	Interferer is out. Other runners return. Foul ball on the batter.	8-6-10b	
9. Interference by coach or others connected with the team (thrown ball).	5-1-1g	For interference by coach, runner is out. For interference by others connected with the offensive team, see 3-5-5 PENALTY and 8-6-16.	3-5-5, 7-5-4, 8-6-16	
10. Interference by coach or other nonplayers connected with the team (batted ball).	5-1-1e	If interference prevented possible double play, the batter and runner closest to home would be declared out.	3-5-6, 7-5-4, 8-6-16	
11. Fair ball over fence in flight or prevented by spectator or player's detached equipment.	5-1-1f	Award all runners home plate.	8-4-3d, 8-4-3f	
12. Fair ball touches a spectator or bounces over, through or lodges in a fence.	5-1-1f	Award all runners appropriate number in umpire's judgment or two bases.	8-4-3g, 8-4-3j	
13. Fair ball touches runner before it touches a fielder or after it passes any fielder other than the pitcher and another fielder has a play.	5-1-1f	Hit runner is out. Batter is awarded first base and credited with a fielder's choice. Others return to base occupied at time of interference unless runner intentionally interferes with ball or fielder.	8-1-2a, 8-4-1f, 8-6-11	
14. Fair ball touches umpire before it touches an infielder or passes any infielder except the pitcher.	5-1-1f	Runners return to bases occupied at time of interference unless forced by batter-runner. Batter awarded first base and credited with a single.	8-1-2a	



DEAD BALL TABLE 1

15.	A thrown ball, not a pitch, which becomes a blocked ball.	5-1-1g	Award all runners two bases from point of release.	8-4-3e
16.	A pitched ball that becomes blocked (F.P.).	5-1-1g	Award all runners one base from time of pitch (F.P.).	8-4-3c
17.	Umpire handles live ball or calls time to inspect the ball or for other reasons, including 5-2-1.	5-1-1h	Runners return to bases they had reached or passed when ball becomes dead.	5-2-1
18.	Fair or foul ball is caught by fielder, who then leaves the field of play with one or both feet.	5-1-1i	Award all runners one base from time the ball became dead except when caught ball is third out.	5-1-1i NOTE, 8-4-3h
19.	A live ball is intentionally carried, kicked, pushed or thrown into dead-ball territory.	8-4-3h	Award all runners two bases from the time the ball became dead.	8-4-3j
20.	Offensive team personnel calls "Time" or uses any other command or commits an act for the purpose of trying to cause the opposing pitcher to violate the pitching rule.	5-1-1j	No runners are allowed to advance. Team warning for first offense. Subsequent offenders ejected.	3-6-9 PEN.
21.	After each strike or ball or as soon as the ball hits the ground (S.P.).	5-1-1k	All runners return to bases they occupied at time of pitch.	8-5-7
22.	Infielder intentionally drops fair fly, fair line drive or fair bunt in flight with at least first base occupied and less than two outs.	5-1-1l	Batter-runner is out. Runners return to their base.	8-2-10
23.	Illegal pitch but not released, or released to a base.	5-1-1o, 5-1-1p, 6-2-7 PEN. (F.P.), 6-2-2	Batter remains at bat and is awarded a ball.	6-2-7 PEN., 6-4-12
24.	Award intentional base on balls.	2-65-2, 5-1-1k	Batter awarded first base. Runners remain at bases occupied at time of walk unless forced to advance.	8-1-1c
25.	Base runner leaves base before pitcher releases pitch (F.P.).	6-2-4c	No pitch is declared and runner is out.	8-6-18
26.	Base runner leaves base before pitched ball reaches home plate (S.P.).	6-4-9b (S.P.)	No pitch is declared and runner is out.	8-6-17
27.	Quick return pitch before batter has taken position or is off balance.	6-2-4b (F.P.), 6-4-9 (S.P.)	All subsequent action on pitch is cancelled. No pitch is declared.	6-2-4 (F.P.) PEN., 6-4-9c (S.P.) PEN.
28.	Fielder loses possession and ball enters dead area.	8-4-3e, 8-4-3g	All runners awarded one base past last base touched at time ball enters deadball territory.	8-4-3e PEN. EXCEPTION 1
29.	Batted ball hitting runner while touching base.	8-1-2a EFFECTS	Batter awarded first base. Runners remain at base occupied at time of pitch unless forced to advance.	8-1-2a EFFECTS
30.	Illegal slide .	8-6-13	Runner is out. Other runners return to last base touched prior to interference.	8-6-13





DEAD BALL TABLE 1

31.	Malicious interference.	8-6-14	Runner is out and ejected. Other runners return to last base touched prior to interference.	5-1-1e, 3-6-18
32.	Batter-runner steps backward toward home plate.	8-2-5	Batter-runner is out. Runners return to bases occupied at time of infraction.	8-2-5
33.	For ball hitting loose equipment on field of team at bat.	5-1-1g	Runner being played on is out. Otherwise runners return to bases occupied at time the ball is declared dead.	8-6-15 PEN.
34.	For ball hitting loose equipment on field of team on defense.	5-1-1g	All runners advance two bases.	8-4-3e PEN.
35.	Interference by batter when attempted putout is by the catcher.	5-1-1p	Ball dead immediately. Batter is out. Runners return to last base touched at time of interference.	7-4-4
36.	Batter-runner fails to advance to first base and enters team area.	8-2-4	Batter-runner is out. Runners return to bases occupied at time of infraction.	8-2-4



DEAD BALL TABLE 1

DELAYED DEAD BALL				
Activity		References	Awards or Penalties	References
1.	Illegal pitch released (F.P.).	5-1-2a	The pitch is ruled a ball if the ball is not hit or batter becomes base runner. Otherwise, if ball is hit and all runners do not advance one base safely, the team at bat has the choice of accepting the play or penalty.	6-1-1, 6-1-2, 6-1-3 PEN.
2.	Illegal pitch released (S.P.).	5-1-2a, 6-4-12	The pitch is ruled a ball. However, if the batter swings, there is no penalty for the illegal pitch.	6-1-4 (S.P.)
3.	Obstruction of batter by catcher or fielder.	5-1-2b	If batter and all runners do not advance at least one base, award batter first base and advance all other runners only if forced or result of play.	8-1-1d
4.	Intentionally touching batted ball with detached player equipment over fair territory.	5-1-2b	Award batter-runner and runners three bases if not made.	8-4-3d
5.	Intentionally touching thrown ball with detached player equipment.	5-1-2b	Award runners two bases if not made.	8-4-3d
6.	Interference by umpire with catcher throwing a non-batted ball (F.P.) .	5-1-2c	If runner is not put out, runners return.	8-5-6
7.	Obstruction.	2-36, 5-1-3	If obstructed runner and all other runners hindered by the obstruction do not reach bases they otherwise would have reached, award runner or runners such bases.	8-4-3b
8.	Contact of any ball with illegal glove or mitt.	8-8-15	The offensive team will have the choice of the result of the play or having the penalty imposed.	8-8-15
9.	Deliberately removing batting helmet in live-ball territory while the ball is live.	5-1-2e	Team warning. Subsequent players and head coach on that team to violate rule are restricted to dugout/bench for the duration of the game.	3-6-1 PEN.





RULE 5-2-1

Suspension of Play

“Time” shall be called by the umpire and play suspended:

- a. as in (5-1-1, 2, 3).
- b. when the umpire considers the weather or ground conditions unfit for play. **NOTE:** After 30 minutes, the umpire may declare the game ended or, by state association adoption, suspended.
- c. when a player, bench personnel or spectator is ordered from the field of play, or player is ordered to secure protective equipment.
- d. when an umpire or player is incapacitated, unless injury occurs during a live ball, then time shall not be called until no further advance or putout is possible.

NOTE: If necessary, the umpire may suspend play immediately if, in the umpire’s judgment, further play may cause injury or jeopardize a participant’s safety. (10-2-3g)





RULE 5-2-1

Suspension of Play

- f. when a player or coach is granted time for a substitution, conference with the pitcher, or for similar cause.

- g. when play is suspended for any other cause, including an award of a base after an infraction, inspection of the ball, or the ending of a half-inning.





RULE 5-2-2

Suspension of Play

When the ball becomes dead:

- a. no action by the defense during that time can cause a player to be put out, except a proper dead-ball appeal. (2-1-3b)
- b. a runner may not advance, nor return to a base that was not touched or that the runner was not in contact with on a caught fly ball during a live ball if the runner had advanced to or beyond a succeeding base.
- c. any runner may advance when awarded a base or bases for an act which occurred before the ball became dead. All awarded bases must be touched. (8-1-2, 8-3-11)





THANK YOU

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