



CHANGES TO OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2007 PLAYING SEASON

IMPORTANT NOTE

This document supersedes earlier versions and includes all changes made by the Official Playing Rules Committee that are effective at the Major League level for the 2007 playing season. Changes made in both 2006 and 2007 are included.



CHANGES TO OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL — 2007 SEASON

1. Formatting of Casebook Comments.

An introductory phrase now precedes the beginning of each Casebook Comment. The phrase simply identifies which Rule the Casebook Comment amplifies. For example the former Casebook Comment

① *“If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he...”*

is now changed to

“Rule 1.16 Comment: If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he...”

This convention is employed throughout the entire rule book.

2. Rules 1.15(a) and 1.15(c): Pitchers’ gloves.

Under Rule 1.15(a) pitchers are now allowed to wear multi-colored gloves so long as the glove is not, in the judgment of the umpire, distracting. This rule is now consistent with current practice at the professional level. Rule 1.15(c) provides a remedy for violations.

② **Rule Changes for 2007: 1.15(a) and 1.15(c)**

1.15 (a) The pitcher’s glove may not, exclusive of piping, be white, gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner.

(b) No pitcher shall attach to his glove any foreign material of a color different from the glove.

(c) The umpire-in-chief shall cause a glove that violates Rules 1.15(a) or 1.15(b) to be removed from the game, either on his own initiative, at the recommendation of another umpire or upon complaint of the opposing manager that the umpire-in-chief agrees has merit.

3. Rule 2.00: Definition of League President.

The definition of League President has been modified slightly. A new Casebook Comment has been added to clarify duties of the League President at the Major League level.

③ **Rule Change for 2007: 2.00 (League President)**

THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT is the league official charged with enforcing these Rules, fining or suspending any player, manager, coach or umpire for violation of these Rules, resolving any disputes involving these Rules or determining any protested games.

Rule 2.00 (League President) Comment: With respect to the Major Leagues, the functions of the League President pursuant to these Rules shall be carried out by the designees of the Commissioner of Baseball. The Commissioner may designate different officials to carry out different functions of a League President pursuant to these Rules.

4. Gender-Neutral Reference.

A short statement has been inserted at the end of Rule 2.00 to indicate that male pronouns in the Official Baseball Rules are to be deemed female as the case may be.

④ **Rule Change for 2007: Note at end of Rule 2.00**

Any reference in these Official Baseball Rules to “he,” “him” or “his” shall be deemed to be a reference to “she,” “her” or “hers,” as the case may be, when the person is female.



5. **Rule 3.01(c): Official baseballs and removing gloss.**

This change removes archaic references regarding official baseballs and means of removing gloss. The rule is now consistent with current practice at the professional level.

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Rule Change for 2007: 3.01(c)
3.00—Game Preliminaries.

3.01 Before the game begins the umpire shall—

- (a) Require strict observance of all rules governing implements of play and equipment of players;
- (b) Be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on Diagrams No. 1 and No. 2) are marked with lime, chalk or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;

(c) Receive from the home club a supply of regulation baseballs, the number and make to be certified to the home club by the league president. The umpire shall inspect the baseballs and ensure they are regulation baseballs and that they are properly rubbed so that the gloss is removed. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls to be used in the game;

6. **Rules 3.01(f) and 8.02(a) Casebook Comment: Rosin bags.**

Rule 3.01(f) is a new rule stipulating that the umpire is to ensure that a rosin bag is placed on the pitcher’s mound prior to the game. The Casebook Comment in 8.02(a) is amended to remove archaic reference of umpires carrying a rosin bag with them.

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Rule Change for 2007: 3.01(f)

(f) The umpire-in-chief shall ensure that an official rosin bag is placed on the ground behind the pitcher’s plate prior to the start of each game.

Rule Change for 2007: 8.02(a) Casebook Comment

Rule 8.02(a) Comment: If at any time the ball hits the rosin bag it is in play. In the case of rain or wet field, the umpire may instruct the pitcher to carry the rosin bag in his hip pocket. A pitcher may use the rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to his bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to his glove or dust any part of his uniform with the rosin bag.

7. **Rules 3.02 and 8.02(a): Intentionally defacing the baseball, penalty for violation.**

Rule 3.02 has been amended to provide an automatic 10-game suspension for any player who intentionally defaces the ball. A cross-reference to Rule 8.02(a) has been added.

The Penalty in Rule 8.02(a) has been changed to be more consistent with the penalty in Rule 3.02: automatic ejection and suspension of the pitcher (10-game suspension specified for National Association Leagues). Note that the previous penalty for violation of 8.02(a)(2) through (6)—which was to call the pitch a ball, warn the pitcher, and have the violation announced—**has been deleted**.

In the Penalty portion of Rules 8.02(a)(2) through (6), a provision has been added under paragraph (d) to cover the result if the team at bat does not elect to take the play. In that event, the penalty is an automatic ball and, if there are any runners on base, a balk.

A new Casebook Comment has been added for Rules 8.02(a)(2) through (6) that allows umpire discretion to warn the pitcher if the pitcher unintentionally violates either 8.02(a)(2) or 8.02(a)(3).



3.02 No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sand-paper, emery-paper or other foreign substance.

PENALTY: The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the game. In addition, the offender shall be suspended automatically for 10 games. For rules in regard to a pitcher defacing the ball, see Rules 8.02(a) (2) through (6).

Rule Changes for 2007: 8.02(a)(2) through (6), new Penalty, new Casebook Comment

8.02 The pitcher shall not—

(a) (1) Bring his pitching hand in contact with his mouth or lips while in the 18 foot circle surrounding the pitching rubber. **EXCEPTION:** Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the umpire prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his hand.

PENALTY: For violation of this part of this rule the umpires shall immediately call a ball. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batsman or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation. Repeated offenders shall be subject to a fine by the league president.

(2) expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove;

(3) rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing;

(4) apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;

(5) deface the ball in any manner; or

(6) deliver a ball altered in a manner prescribed by Rule 8.02(a)(2) through (5) or what is called the “shine” ball, “spit” ball, “mud” ball or “emery” ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub the ball between his bare hands.

PENALTY: For violation of any part of Rules 8.02(a)(2) through (6)

(a) the pitcher shall be ejected immediately from the game and shall be suspended automatically. In National Association Leagues, the automatic suspension shall be for 10 games.

(b) If a play follows the violation called by the umpire, the manager of the team at bat may advise the plate umpire-in-chief that he elects to accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

(c) Even though the team at bat elects to take the play, the violation shall be recognized and the penalties in subsection (a) will still be in effect.

(d) If the manager of the team at bat does not elect to accept the play, the umpire-in-chief shall call an automatic ball and, if there are any runners on base, a balk.

(e) The umpire shall be sole judge on whether any portion of this rule has been violated.

Rules 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6) Comment: If a pitcher violates either Rule 8.02(a)(2) or 8.02(a)(3) and, in the judgment of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend, by his act, to alter the characteristics of a pitched ball, then the umpire may, in his discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of applying the penalty set forth for violations of 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6). If the pitcher persists in violating either of those Rules, however, the umpire should then apply the penalty.



8. **Rules 4.10(d), 4.11(d), and 4.12: Rules related to tie games and suspended games.**

Rule 4.10(d) has been amended so that a **regulation game called with the score tied now becomes a suspended game**.

Rules 4.11(d) and 4.12 have been revised accordingly to agree with the above change, and Rule 4.12 has been reorganized and amplified for “cleaner” and clearer explanation of the rule.

NOTE: This change has no impact for National Association Leagues (Minor Leagues) that have previously adopted the optional suspended rules. In those leagues application of the new rule is a moot point because a regulation game called with the score tied is currently a suspended game under the optional suspended game rules. That particular stipulation has been removed from the “optional” section of the Minor League rule and inserted in the main portion of the rule so that it now applies to all levels of professional baseball.

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Rule Change for 2007: 4.10(d)

- 4.10(a) A regulation game consists of nine innings, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the ninth inning or only a fraction of it, or (2) because the umpire calls the game. EXCEPTION: National Association leagues may adopt a rule providing that one or both games of a doubleheader shall be seven innings in length. In such games, any of these rules applying to the ninth inning shall apply to the seventh inning.
- (b) If the score is tied after nine completed innings play shall continue until (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.
- (c) If a game is called, it is a regulation game:
 - (1) If five innings have been completed;
 - (2) If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half-innings than the visiting team has scored in five completed half-innings;
 - (3) If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fifth inning to tie the score.
- (d) If a regulation game is called with the score tied, it shall become a suspended game. See Rule 4.12.
- (e) If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, the umpire shall declare it “No Game.”
- (f) Rain checks will not be honored for any regulation or suspended

Rule Change for 2007: 4.11(d)

4.11—Continued

last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runner and all runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate.

APPROVED RULING: The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the ninth or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

- (d) A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, unless it becomes a suspended game pursuant to Rule 4.12(a).

Rule 4.12 follows on next page...



Rule Change for 2007: 4.12

4.12 SUSPENDED GAMES.

- (a) A game shall become a suspended game that must be completed at a future date if the game is terminated for any of the following reasons:
- (1) A curfew imposed by law;
 - (2) A time limit permissible under league rules;
 - (3) Light failure or malfunction of a mechanical field device under control of the home club. (Mechanical field device shall include automatic tarpaulin or water removal equipment);
 - (4) Darkness, when a law prevents the lights from being turned on;
 - (5) Weather, if a regulation game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead; or
 - (6) It is a regulation game that is called with the score tied.

National Association Leagues may also adopt the following rules for suspended games. (If adopted by a National Association League, Rule 4.10(e) would not apply to their games.):

- (7) The game has not become a regulation game ($4\frac{1}{2}$ innings with the home team ahead, or 5 innings with the visiting club ahead or tied).
- (8) If a game is suspended before it becomes a regulation game, and is continued prior to another regularly scheduled game, the regularly scheduled game will be limited to seven innings.
- (9) If a game is suspended after it is a regulation game, and is continued prior to another regularly scheduled game, the regularly scheduled game will be a nine inning game.

4.12—Continued

EXCEPTION: Optional Rules 4.12(a)(7), 4.12(a)(8) and 4.12(a)(9) for National Association Leagues will not apply to the last scheduled game between the two teams during the championship season or league playoffs.

No game called because of a curfew (Rule 4.12(a)(1)), weather (Rule 4.12(a)(5)), a time limit (Rule 4.12(a)(2)) or with a tied score (Rule 4.12(a)(6)) shall be a suspended game unless it has progressed far enough to have been a regulation game pursuant to Rule 4.10(c). A game called pursuant to Rules 4.12(a)(3) or 4.12(a)(4) shall be a suspended game at any time after it starts.

NOTE: Weather and similar conditions—Rules 4.12(a)(1) through 4.12(a)(5)—shall take precedence in determining whether a called game shall be a suspended game. If a game is halted by weather, and subsequent light failure or an intervening curfew or time limit prevents its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. If a game is halted by light failure, and weather or field conditions prevent its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. A game can only be considered a suspended game if stopped for any of the six reasons specified in Rule 4.12(a).

- (b) A suspended game shall be resumed and completed as follows:
- (1) Immediately preceding the next scheduled single game between the two clubs on the same grounds; or
 - (2) Immediately preceding the next scheduled doubleheader between the two clubs on the same grounds, if no single game remains on the schedule; or
 - (3) If suspended on the last scheduled date between the two clubs in that city, transferred and played on the grounds of the opposing club, if possible;
 - (i) Immediately preceding the next scheduled single game, or
 - (ii) Immediately preceding the next scheduled doubleheader, if no single game remains on the schedule.
 - (4) Any suspended game not completed prior to the last scheduled game between the two teams during the championship season shall become a called game. If such game becomes a called game and
 - (i) has progressed far enough to become a regulation game, and one team is ahead, the team that is ahead shall be declared the winner;

Rule 4.12 continues on next page...



4.12—Continued

- (ii) has progressed far enough to become a regulation game, and the score is tied, the game shall be declared a “tie game.” A tie game is to be replayed in its entirety, unless the league president determines that playing the rescheduled game is not necessary to affect the league championship; or
 - (iii) has not progressed far enough to become a regulation game, the game shall be declared “No Game.” In such case, the game is to be replayed in its entirety, unless the league president determines that playing the rescheduled game is not necessary to affect the league championship.
- (c) A suspended game shall be resumed at the exact point of suspension of the original game. The completion of a suspended game is a continuation of the original game. The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any player may be replaced by a player who had not been in the game prior to the suspension. No player removed before the suspension may be returned to the lineup.

A player who was not with the club when the game was suspended may be used as a substitute, even if he has taken the place of a player no longer with the club who would not have been eligible because he had been removed from the lineup before the game was suspended.

Rule 4.12(c) Comment: If immediately prior to the call of a suspended game, a substitute pitcher has been announced but has not retired the side or pitched until the batter becomes a baserunner, such pitcher, when the suspended game is later resumed may, but is not required to start the resumed portion of the game. However, if he does not start he will be considered as having been substituted for and may not be used in that game.

- (d) Rain checks will not be honored for any regulation or suspended game that has progressed to or beyond a point of play described in Rule 4.10(c).

9. Rule 4.19 Casebook Comment: Protesting games.

Casebook Comment now requires that umpires are officially notified of the protest “before the next pitch, play or attempted play” as opposed to the previous wording of “before the next pitch is made or a runner is retired.” This change provides consistency with requirements regarding appeal plays.

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Rule Change for 2007: 4.19 Casebook Comment

4.19 PROTESTING GAMES. Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire’s decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final.

Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered unless in the opinion of the League President the violation adversely affected the protesting team’s chances of winning the game.

Rule 4.19 Comment: Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplication of the rules the protest will not be recognized unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play. A protest arising on a game-ending play may be filed until 12 noon the following day with the league office.

10. Rule 6.02(c): Batter refuses to take position in batter’s box.

Rule 6.02(c) has been amended so that the penalty for a batter who refuses to take his position in batter’s box is now an **automatic strike** (pitcher no longer ordered to pitch the ball for the strike penalty to be applied). The ball is dead during the penalty. A new Casebook Comment has also been added for 2007.



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Rule Changes for 2007: 6.02(c) and New Casebook Comment

- (c) If the batter refuses to take his position in the batter's box during his time at bat, the umpire shall call a strike on the batter. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. After the penalty, the batter may take his proper position and the regular ball and strike count shall continue. If the batter does not take his proper position before three strikes have been called, the batter shall be declared out.

Rule 6.02(c) Comment: The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(c) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(c).

11. Rule 6.02(d): Pace-of-Game rule for National Association Leagues (all Minor Leagues).

Rule 6.02(d) has been added to the Official Baseball Rules as a permanent rule for all Minor Leagues. This rule was adopted as an experimental rule for for the 2005 and 2006 seasons in the Minor Leagues. Starting with the 2007 season this rule becomes a permanent rule. A new Casebook Comment to Rule 6.02(d)(1) has also been added for 2007. The entirety of Rule 6.02(d) applies only to the Minor Leagues.

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Rule Change for 2007: 6.02(d)

6.02(d) The following rule shall be in effect for all National Association Leagues:

- (1) The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:
 - (i) The batter swings at a pitch;
 - (ii) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;
 - (iii) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";
 - (iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;
 - (v) The batter feints a bunt;
 - (vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;
 - (vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or
 - (viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

Notwithstanding Rule 6.02(c), if the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed in Rule 6.02(d)(1)(i) through (viii) applies, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. The umpire shall award additional strikes, without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch, if the batter remains outside the batter's box and further delays play.

Rule 6.02(d)(1) Comment: The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(d)(1) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(d)(1). [underlined portions are new for 2007]

- (2) The batter may leave the batter's box and the dirt area surrounding home plate when "Time" is called for the purpose of
 - (i) making a substitution; or
 - (ii) a conference by either team.

Rule 6.02(d) Comment: Umpires shall encourage the on-deck batter to take a position in the batter's box quickly after the previous batter reaches base or is put out.

12. Casebook Comments to Rules 6.05(a) and 7.04(c): Prohibits catching ball in the dugout.

A Casebook Comment to Rule 6.05(a) has been added to the rules to prohibit fielders from catching a ball in the dugout or other out-of-play area. Fielders may no longer enter the dugout to make a catch. Fielders may still reach into the dugout to make a catch but they may no longer step into the dugout to do so. The Casebook Comment to Rule 7.04(c) has been amended to delete reference allowing a catch to be made in the dugout and clarifies from which base the award is to be made when a fielder falls down in the dugout or other out-of-play area after making a legal catch.



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Rule Change for 2007: 6.05(a) Casebook Comment

6.05 A batter is out when—

- (a) His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

Rule 6.05(a) Comment: A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other out-of-play area (such as the stands), must have one or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the lip of the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other out-of-play area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, falls into a dugout or other out-of-play area, in which case the ball is dead. Status of runners shall be as described in Rule 7.04(c) Comment.

Rule Change for 2007: 7.04(c) Casebook Comment

- (c) A fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field;

Rule 7.04(c) Comment: If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should fall into a stand or among spectators or into the dugout or any other out-of-play area while in possession of the ball after making a legal catch, or fall while in the dugout after making a legal catch, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder fell into, or in, such out-of-play area.

13. Rules 6.05(k) and 7.09(k): Redundant rules regarding the three-foot lane; batter-runner allowed to exit three-foot lane upon reaching first base.

Rules 6.05(k) and 7.09(k) were redundant and wording of the two were nearly identical. Rule 7.09(k) has been deleted and the Casebook Comment associated with 7.09(k) has been moved to 6.05(k). Other rules in 7.09 have been renumbered accordingly.

In addition, a further amendment was made to the Casebook Comment of Rule 6.05(k) for the 2007 season that allows for the batter-runner to exit the three foot lane as he reaches first base.

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Rule Change for 2007: 6.05(k) Casebook Comment

- (k) In running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, he runs outside (to the right of) the three-foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire’s judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base, in which case the ball is dead; except that he may run outside (to the right of) the three-foot line or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

Rule 6.05(k) Comment: The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the three-foot lane or on the lines marking the lane. The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base for the sole purpose of touching first base. [underlined portion is new for 2007]

14. Rule 6.06(d) Casebook Comment: Batter uses or attempts to use doctored bat.

A new Casebook Comment has been added to clarify what is meant by “uses or attempts to use” an illegal bat. The interpretation is the same that has been in practice at both the Major and Minor League levels.

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Rule Change for 2007: 6.06(d) Casebook Comment

- (d) He uses or attempts to use a bat that, in the umpire’s judgment, has been altered or tampered with in such a way to improve the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes, bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc.

No advancement on the bases will be allowed and any out or outs made during a play shall stand.

In addition to being called out, the player shall be ejected from the game and may be subject to additional penalties as determined by his League President.

Rule 6.06(d) Comment: A batter shall be deemed to have used or attempted to use an illegal bat if he brings such a bat into the batter’s box.



15. Rule 6.08(c) Casebook Comment: Results of catcher's interference on squeeze play clarified.

The two next-to-last paragraphs of the Casebook Comments to Rule 6.08(c) have been amended so as not to be in conflict with Rule 7.07.

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Rule Change for 2007: 6.08(c) Casebook Comment

- (c) The catcher or any fielder interferes with him. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.

Rule 6.08(c) Comment: If catcher's interference is called with a play in progress the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first base, or a runner misses his next base, he shall be considered as having reached the base, as stated in Note of Rule 7.04(d).

Examples of plays the manager might elect to take:

- 1. Runner on third, one out, batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher's interference was called. The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have runner remain at third and batter awarded first base.*
- 2. Runner on second base. Catcher interferes with batter as he bunts ball fairly sending runner to third base. The manager may rather have runner on third base with an out on the play than have runners on second and first.*

If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 7.07.

If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 6.08(c). In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter start over from "scratch."

16. Rules 6.09(b) and 7.08(a): Batter-runner attempting to advance after dropped third strike; batter-runner establishing his baseline.

A new ruling provides that a batter-runner be declared out after a dropped third strike if he **leaves the dirt circle around home plate** while not on his way to try to reach first base. (The previous Rule provided that a batter may still try to reach first base until he has reached the dugout or his defensive position.)

Under the new rule, when the batter-runner does not realize a third strike is not caught and starts for his dugout or position, the batter-runner is called out once he leaves the dirt area surrounding home plate.

This change affects the Casebook Comment in Rule 6.09(b) (Comment has been rewritten); as well as the Casebook Comment in Rule 7.08(a) (last paragraph of Comment and Approved Ruling following Comment have been deleted).

In addition, Official Baseball Rule 7.08(a)(1) has been modified for 2007 to include the interpretation currently used in professional baseball that a runner "establishes his own baseline."

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Rule Change for 2007: 6.09(b) Casebook Comment

6.09 The batter becomes a runner when—

- (a) He hits a fair ball;
- (b) The third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied, or (2) first base is occupied with two out;

Rule 6.09(b) Comment: A batter who does not realize his situation on a third strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt circle surrounding home plate.



Rule Changes for 2007: 7.08(a)(1) and 7.08(a) Casebook Comment

7.08 Any runner is out when—

(a) (1) He runs more than three feet away from his baseline to avoid being tagged unless his action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's baseline is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base he is attempting to reach safely; or [underlined portions are new for 2007]

(2) after touching first base, he leaves the baseline, obviously abandoning his effort to touch the next base;

Rule 7.08(a) Comment: Any runner after reaching first base who leaves the baseline heading for his dugout or his position believing that there is no further play, may be declared out if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning his efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner.

This rule also covers the following and similar plays: Less than two out, score tied last of ninth inning, runner on first, batter hits a ball out of park for winning run, the runner on first passes second and thinking the home run automatically wins the game, cuts across diamond toward his bench as batter-runner circles bases. In this case, the base runner would be called out “for abandoning his effort to touch the next base” and batter-runner permitted to continue around bases to make his home run valid. If there are two out, home run would not count (see Rule 7.12). This is not an appeal play.

PLAY. Runner believing he is called out on a tag at first or third base starts for the dugout and progresses a reasonable distance still indicating by his actions that he is out, shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

17. Rule 7.05(j): Pitched ball touched by detached equipment.

A new rule has been added (7.05(j)) that covers a pitched ball being touched by detached equipment. Previously, this situation was not covered under the Rules, although interpretations existed at both the Major and Minor League levels. The award of one base now concurs with interpretations at the professional level.

17

New Rule for 2007: 7.05(j)

(j) One base, if a fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play, and the award is made from the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.

18. Rules 7.09(b) and 6.05(h): Batter hitting ball with bat second time.

Rules 7.09(b) and 6.05(h) were redundant; their wording was identical. Rule 7.09(b) has been deleted and other sections of 7.09 have been renumbered accordingly. No change to Rule 6.05(h).

19. Rules 8.01(a) and 8.01(b): Pitcher's position on the pitching rubber, delivery of ball to the batter.

Several changes to the pitching rules now allow a pitcher to have only a portion of his pivot foot, rather than the entire foot, in contact with the rubber, which is consistent with some contemporary pitching deliveries. Furthermore, in the windup position, a pitcher is allowed to have his free foot at either side of the rubber, in front of the rubber, on the rubber, or behind the rubber, and to step to either side of the rubber—all of which are commonly accepted current practices. Previous editions of the Rules prohibited this.



Under the new rules:

- (a) Only a portion of the pitcher's pivot foot must be in contact with the rubber (no longer "entire pivot foot"). This applies to both windup and set positions. Under the new rule, pitchers may pitch "off the end" of the rubber, as long as any part of the pivot foot is in contact with the rubber.
- (b) In the windup position, the pitcher's free foot may be on the rubber, in front of the rubber, to the side of the rubber, or behind the rubber.
- (c) In the windup position, the pitcher is permitted to step to the side during his delivery (previously prohibited).

19

Rule Changes for 2007: 8.01(a) and 8.01(b)

- (a) **The Windup Position.** The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without interruption or alteration. He shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in his actual delivery of the ball to the batter, he may take one step backward, and one step forward with his free foot.

When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of his body, with his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and his other foot free, he will be considered in the Windup Position.

Rule 8.01(a) Comment: In the Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his "free" foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber.

From the Windup Position, the pitcher may:

- (1) deliver the ball to the batter, or
- (2) step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or
- (3) disengage the rubber (if he does he must drop his hand to his sides).

In disengaging the rubber the pitcher must step off with his pivot foot and not his free foot first.

He may not go into a set or stretch position—if he does it is a balk.

- (b) **The Set Position.** Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when he stands facing the batter with his pivot foot in contact with, and his other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of his body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position he may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot. Before assuming Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the stretch." But if he so elects, he shall come to Set Position before delivering the ball to the batter. After assuming Set Position, any natural motion associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without alteration or interruption.

Preparatory to coming to a set position, the pitcher shall have one hand on his side; from this position he shall go to his set position as defined in Rule 8.01(b) without interruption and in one continuous motion.

The pitcher, following his stretch, must (a) hold the ball in both hands in front of his body and (b) come to a complete stop. This must be enforced. Umpires should watch this closely. Pitchers are constantly attempting to "beat the rule" in their efforts to hold runners on bases and in cases where the pitcher fails to make a complete "stop" called for in the rules, the umpire should immediately call a "Balk."



20. Rule 8.01(b) Casebook Comment: New Casebook Comment added regarding pitcher not coming to a complete stop when using the set position with no runners on base.

A new Casebook Comment provides that a pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the set position with no runners on base. However, the Casebook Comment provides for the umpire to declare a quick pitch if, in the umpire's judgment, the pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard (for which the penalty is a ball when no runners are on base).

20

Rule Change for 2007: 8.01(b), Casebook Comment

Rule 8.01(b) Comment: With no runners on base, the pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the Set Position. If, however, in the umpire's judgment, a pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard, this delivery shall be deemed a quick pitch, for which the penalty is a ball. See Rule 8.05(e) Comment.

21. Rule 8.02(b): Penalty for possession of foreign substance.

Rule 8.02(b) has been amended to include an automatic suspension (10 games in National Association Leagues) for possession of foreign substance by the pitcher.

21

Rule Change for 2007: 8.02(b)

(b) Have on his person, or in his possession, any foreign substance. For infraction of this section (b) the penalty shall be immediate ejection from the game. In addition, the pitcher shall be suspended automatically. In National Association Leagues, the automatic suspension shall be for 10 games. [underlined portion is new]

22. Rule 8.04: Time limitation for pitcher to deliver the ball to the batter with no runners on base.

Rule 8.04 has been amended from 20 seconds to 12 seconds for the pitcher to deliver the ball with no runners on base. The revised rule also clarifies when the timing starts and stops.

22

Rule Change for 2007: 8.04

8.04 When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 12 seconds after he receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call "Ball."

The 12-second timing starts when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter is in the box, alert to the pitcher. The timing stops when the pitcher releases the ball.

The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take his position on the rubber promptly. Obvious delay by the pitcher should instantly be penalized by the umpire.

23. Rule 8.05(h) Casebook Comment: Penalty for pitcher delaying the game.

A new Casebook Comment has been added to Rule 8.05(h) to clarify the different penalties and situations in the Official Baseball Rules when the pitcher delays the game (different penalties are prescribed in different rules).



23

Rule Change for 2007: 8.04(h) Casebook Comment

(h) The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;

Rule 8.05(h) Comment: Rule 8.05(h) shall not apply when a warning is given pursuant to Rule 8.02(c) (which prohibits intentional delay of a game by throwing to fielders not in an attempt to put a runner out). If a pitcher is ejected pursuant to Rule 8.02(c) for continuing to delay the game, the penalty in Rule 8.05(h) shall also apply. Rule 8.04 (which sets a time limit for a pitcher to deliver the ball when the bases are unoccupied) applies only when there are no runners on base.

24. Rule 4.11(c) Approved Ruling: Time-play situations involving game-winning runs.

The Approved Ruling to Official Baseball Rule 4.11(c) has been amended to clarify that a time-play situation may exist even if the batter hits a home run out of the ball park to apparently win a game.

24

Rule Change for 2007: 4.11(c) Approved Ruling

APPROVED RULING: The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the ninth or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored, unless there are two out and the winning run has not yet reached home plate when the runner passes another, in which case the inning is over and only those runs that scored before the runner passes another shall count. [underlined portion is new for 2007]

25. Rule 4.03(d): Archaic reference regarding the catcher’s lines.

Official Baseball Rule 4.03(d) has been deleted. It contained an archaic reference to the “catcher’s lines.”

25

Rule Change for 2007: Rule 4.03(d) Deleted

Rule 4.03(d) has been deleted from the Official Baseball Rules:

~~(d) Except the batter, or a runner attempting to score, no offensive player shall cross the catcher’s lines when the ball is in play.~~ [lined-out portion has been deleted from the Rules]

26. Rule 10.00: The Official Scorer (Official Scoring Rules).

NOTE: Official Baseball Rule 10.00 (scoring rules) has been revised substantially. The changes are not described in this document because they do not involve the duties of umpires.

