

7.01.D Any bat permanently stamped with the official USA Baseball logo is legal to use in any USSSA baseball event, except were BBCOR is required. In all 13U Events all Players and all Teams must use a max drop of 8 (-8). In all 14U Events all Players and all Teams must use a max drop 5 (-5) bat.



7.01.F In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats shall be worn. In age divisions 13U and older, traditional metal baseball spikes shall be permitted.

7.01.G The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher’s helmet with facemask and either a built-in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup. **Rule 7.01.G Comment:** In all age divisions 14u and below, the catcher’s helmet shall fully cover both ears.

7.01.H All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play.

7.01.I **Special Protective Gear:** USSSA continues its long-standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate.

7.01.J **Bat / ball boys / girls under the age of eighteen (18) shall not be permitted.**

7.02.J Any coach coaching a base must either be 18 years of age or wear a protective helmet. Only adults will be allowed to be pitching coaches in Machine Pitch or Coach Pitch events.

7.04 The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner:

7.04.A An Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from either the pitcher or catcher without throwing pitches.

7.04.B 7.04.B.1 **At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record from the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If there are no substitute players available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out.**

7.04.B.2 If the Pitcher or Catcher get out prior to an out being recorded in the 1st inning, and there are no substitute players the curtesy runner shall be the batter furthest from coming back up to bat in the line-up that is not the Pitcher or Catcher of record. In all other innings, the courtesy runner is the last batted out and if no outs have been recorded, it will be the last out from the previous inning.

7.04.B.3 The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time while the courtesy runner is still on base, if determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules shall be used without penalty.

7.04.C **Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties. Malicious contact is solely up to the discretion of the Umpire.**

Rule 7.04.C Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires.

7.04.D **A runner who jumps over a player will be called out whether or not contact is made with the defensive player.**

7.04.E A dead ball appeal can be appealed directly to the umpire, without the Pitcher throwing to the appealed base. Only one dead ball appeal is allowed on any play.

7.04.F Feinting/Faking a bunt and swinging away is allowed in all ages 9 and up.

7.05 The Pitcher:

7.05.A A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the Umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected. If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it’s deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.05. B.7.

7.05.B (Chart 7.05.B-1) The end of the day for the purpose of this rule shall be the time of day or night when the ballpark is shut down and the teams go home for the night break. Games that for any reason extend past midnight (12:00 AM) or start late at night, past midnight (12:00 AM) and are completed before the teams take the night break, shall count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break pursuant to USSSA Rules 7.03.D shall be a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the portion of the game played prior to suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day and the outs recorded during the portion of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.

7.05.B.1 ONE DAY MAXIMUM TO PITCH THE NEXT DAY: The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in one (1) day and still pitch the next day.

Rule 7.05.B.1 Example: In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of three (3) innings in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day. If the player pitches three and one-third (3 1/3) or more innings in one (1) day, the player cannot legally pitch the next day.

	AGE ONE DAY	ONE DAY	THREE DAY	DIVISION
	MAXIMUM	MAXIMUM	MAXIMUM	
7U – 12U	3	6	8	
Scholastic 13U – 14U	3	7	8	
Scholastic 15U – 18U	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	

Chart 7.05.B-1

7.05.B.2 ONE DAY MAXIMUM: The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in one (1) day.

Rule 7.05.B.2 Example: In the 7U – 12U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of six (6) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to pitch the next day. Similarly, in the 13U – 14U age divisions,

a player may legally pitch a maximum of seven (7) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to legally pitch the next day.

7.05.B.3 THREE DAY MAXIMUM: The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

7.05.B.4 MANDATORY DAYS OF REST:

7.05.B.4(a) A player that pitches more than three (3) innings in one day **MUST** rest the next day.

7.05.B.4(b) A player that pitches eight (8) innings in two (2) consecutive days **MUST** rest the next day.

7.05.B.4(c) A player that pitches three (3) consecutive days (regardless of total quantity of innings pitched) **MUST** rest the next day.

7.05.B.5 For all cumulative totals in this rule, one (1) out equals one-third (1/3) of an inning, two (2) outs equals two-thirds (2/3) of an inning and three (3) outs equals one (1) full inning. A pitcher that pitches in a game and records no outs is not charged with any innings pitched.

7.05.B.6 Outs recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitcher's innings limits.

7.05.B.7 For purposes of pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the legal pitching limits pursuant to these rules.

Rule 7.05.C.7 Exception: Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play shall not be counted against the pitcher for the purpose of this rule but shall be counted towards the pitcher's limits with regards to the eligibility to pitch the next day, etc.

7.05.B.8 It shall be the responsibility of each team to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records any out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game as the pitcher of record. If such violation is the last recorded out of the game, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the Umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play.

Rule 7.05.B.1 – 7.05.B.7 Penalty: Any violation shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game

7.05.B.9 Pitch Counts may be used in Major Events with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball Operations.

7.05.C Pitching mound visits will remain 2 coaches visits per inning, with the second coaches visit to the same pitcher in the same inning resulting in a pitching change.

7.05.D A Pitcher shall pitch to one batter, until the batter is put out, or reaches 1st base, or the inning is over. A pitcher that starts an inning must pitch to the first batter until the batter is put out or reaches 1st base. USSSA will **NOT** be using the MLB mandatory batter limits.

7.05.E USSSA will not be adopting the MLB pitch clock rule.

7.05.F USSSA will not be adopting the Pitchers Disengagement rule.

RULE 9.00 – MACHINE PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

9.01 Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball (this includes a ball that is legally bunted).

9.02 Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.

9.03 Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.

9.04 Pitching Machine: The front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.

9.05 Recommended pitching machine speeds:

9.05.A 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 7U age division. **9.05.B**
39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 8U age division.

9.06 Pitching Machine Operator: The Pitching Machine operator shall be an adult at least eighteen (18) years of age.

9.07 Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baseline.

9.08 The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

Rule 9.08 Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.

Rule 9.08 Additional Penalty: First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

9.09 Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.

9.10 The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

9.11 The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.

9.11.A Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order shall be declared an out each turn at bat.

Rule 9.11.A Approved Ruling: A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

9.12 Teams may use free substitution on defense, but the batting order shall remain the same.

9.13 Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.

9.13.A Fake bunts shall be prohibited. A batter that "shows" bunt is committed to an attempt to bunt or take the pitch.

Rule 9.13.A Penalty: A batter who swings after "showing" bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.

9.14 The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.

9.15 A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.

9.16 Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.

- 9.17** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team.
- 9.18** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning.
- 9.19** The game is over, when the opposing team is mathematically eliminated from scoring enough runs to win or tie the game. (Run Rules still apply)
- 9.20** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as all runners are not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.
Rule 9.20 Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 9.21** When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners shall advance one (1) base.

RULE 13.00 – SAFETY RULES

13.01 FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL CONCUSSION LAWS:

USSSA, as a sanctioning body of athletic events, shares the concerns being raised on a national and local level regarding concussions and concussion symptoms in participants, coaches/managers, and umpires/referees in USSSA sanctioned activities. USSSA encourages its directors, umpires, coaches, referees, teams, team managers, and all adults involved in youth activities and participants to learn all they can about concussions in athletics and requires each of them and each of the USSSA directors to follow all federal, state and local laws (including concussion training and reaction laws) with regard to athletic competition sanctioned by USSSA. In addition, USSSA has added the following to the rule books of each USSSA sport which does not defer to another organization for its rule book.

Upon becoming aware that a participant or coach/manager of his team has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), the Team Manager will not allow that person to participate in any USSSA sanctioned event and if occurring during a USSSA sanctioned event, shall have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Upon becoming aware that a participant, coach/manager or official/umpire/referee has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), a USSSA official/umpire/referee or director will have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Without a written medical clearance from a licensed medical doctor to return to play, such persons will not be allowed to return to the USSSA playing field in a USSSA sanctioned event. For officials/umpires/referees, the medical written consent form must be presented to the Tournament Director and retained permanently by the USSSA State Director. For participants and coaches/managers, the medical written consent form must be presented to the Team Manager and retained permanently by the Team Manager. Any Team Manager, who allows a coach/manager or participant back on a USSSA sanctioned event playing field without first obtaining the required written consent, may be suspended by the State Director for up to one year and upon request of the State Director, may be suspended for a longer duration by the USSSA disbarment committee. State Directors allowing an official/umpire/referee back in the field of play without the necessary consent will be subject to being disciplined as determined by the USSSA Board of Directors.

In the event of severe head trauma in a USSSA sanctioned activity, the injured person will not be moved, and an ambulance will be called, unless otherwise directed by a qualified medical professional. The parent or guardian of the injured person, however, will not be bound by this protocol and may choose a different approach consistent with their legal rights as the parent or guardian.

- 13.02.C.9(b)** No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if any of the graphics of the bat have worn off. For example, even if the only graphics that have worn off are not Key Graphic Information and are only items such as the patent no., a manufacturer logo, or the approval mark of another association, the bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
- 13.02.C.9(c)** No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play if the paint has been worn through and the actual bat material is showing. For example, if at the end of the barrel next to the taper where there are no graphics the bat paint is worn off and the underlying bat material is exposed, that bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
- 13.02.C.9(d)** No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play if there is a foreign substance on the barrel or taper of a bat. Foreign substances included among other substances, pine tar, stick-em type products and even dirt or mud, but only if the substance adds to the thickness of the barrel or covers Key Graphic Information such as the USSSA 1.15 BPF mark, the serial number of the bat, the model or manufacturer name, official softball, etc. Players are responsible for their equipment and must clean such substances off of their bats so that the substance does not add to the thickness of the bat or obscure any Key Graphics Information about the bat. For example, while bats shall surely get dirt on them under normal use and may have pine tar added to the grip, if the dirt or pine tar obscures Key Graphic Information or adds to the thickness of the bat, such bats cannot be used in USSSA play until the dirt or pine tar has been removed to the extent necessary to make all such Key Graphic Information readable and the bat not have increased thickness. If Key Graphic Information about a bat cannot be read, the bat should not be used in USSSA play.
- 13.02.C.9(e)** If any removed bat pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.02.C.9 is brought back into play at any USSSA sanctioned event at any time, the owner and user of such bat may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. And if the worn / abused / damaged / foreign substance is apparent enough that the batter should have been aware of it, the batter may be so suspended for bringing such a bat into the batter's box without

having been warned in advance. Players are responsible for their equipment and must not use equipment that is even potentially illegal for use in USSSA sanctioned play.

- 13.02.C.9(f)** In addition to the player being suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct, coaches of youth teams may also be so suspended when their players attempt to bat with such bats. Also, coaches of adult teams which have multiple offenses under this rule may also be so suspended for failing to have his team follow USSSA equipment rules. Please be reminded that unsportsmanlike conduct can result in a game or tournament suspension in the discretion of the Umpire or tournament director and up to a year suspension in the discretion of the State Director.

13.02.C.11 Altered Bat: An "Altered Bat" is a bat that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

13.02.C.11(a) The bat has had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by addition of graphics, painting, repainting, removal of bat material or paint by any means including but not limited to sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means.

13.02.C.11(b) The bat has had the plug, or the knob removed / replaced or changed in any way.

13.02.C.11(c) The bat has had anything removed or added or inserted to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob. Other examples of altering a bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers' markings or replacing the handle of a bat with a new handle. Replacing the grip, adding tape or adding a build up to the handle is not considered altering a bat.

13.02.C.11(d) The bat has been subjected to pressure in a manner that exceeds that of striking the bat at game speed swing speed against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game speeds. Such pressure would include, but is not limited to, compressing the bat, rolling the bat, vicing the bat or hitting the bat against an object such as a tree or pole. The bat has in any other way had its on-field performance improved by physically changing the bat (other than by hitting the bat at game condition swing speeds against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game condition speeds).

RULE 14.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP & EJECTIONS

- 14.01** All players, coaches, managers, sponsors, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. The league/tournament director has the authority to remove anyone from the event at any time for unsportsmanlike conduct. Any player, coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive shall at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party shall be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.
- 14.02** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred / suspended.
- 14.03** Any coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove themselves from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove them self from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of the game at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 14.04** If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.
- 14.05** USSSA reserves the right to deny admission to or eject any person/team who USSSA, in its sole discretion, determines poses a risk to the health and safety of other participants, officials, or spectators and/or whose conduct violates any applicable code of conduct, or whose conduct is otherwise disruptive or disorderly.

RULE 18.00 – TOBACCO & TOBACCO RELATED PRODUCTS

- 18.01** The use of **ANY** tobacco or any electronic smoking devices such as e-cigarettes, vape pens or atomizers shall be prohibited by all participants (including but not limited to players, manager, coaches, umpires) within the confines of the playing field and dugouts. Local facilities may have stricter policies prohibiting tobacco from facility and parking areas. These policies, if any, shall be recognized and enforced during USSSA events.