



New FP Pitching Rule for 2004

RULE 6. PITCHING REGULATIONS. (*Fast Pitch Only: Male Categories up to and including Bantam and all Female Categories*)

N.B. The EFFECT for all Sections 1 - 8 follow at end of Section 8.

Sec. 1. PRELIMINARIES. Before commencing the delivery (pitch), the pitcher:

- a. May not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in his possession.
- b. Shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- c. Must have both feet on the ground within the **61.0 cm (24 inch)** length of the pitcher's plate. The hips shall be in line with first and third bases and both feet must be in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- d. Must, while standing on the plate and with the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand, take the signal, or appear to be taking a signal, from the catcher with the hands separated.
- e. Must, after taking the signal, bring his whole body to a full and complete stop with the ball held in the hand or glove with both held together in front of the body. This position must be held for not less than **one (1)** second and not more than **ten (10)** seconds before releasing the ball.

Sec. 2. STARTING THE PITCH. The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his wind-up.

Sec. 3. LEGAL DELIVERY.

- a. The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b. The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, he removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- c. The pitcher must not use a windup in which there is a stop, or reversal, of the forward motion.
- d. The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arm on the windmill pitch. However, he may drop his arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. This allows the arm to pass the hip twice.
- e. The delivery must be an underhanded motion, with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.

- f. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight-line position of the body.
- g. Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.
- h. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher may take one step with the leading, non-pivot foot simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward toward the batter and within the **61.0 cm (24 inch)** length of the pitcher's plate.

NOTE: It is not a step if the pitcher slides his foot across the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate. Lifting the pivot foot off the pitcher's plate and returning it to the plate, creating a rocking motion, is an illegal act.

- i. The pivot foot must remain in contact with, or may push off and drag away from, the pitcher's plate prior to the stepping (non-pivot) foot touching the ground, provided that the toe of the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground.
- j. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate before the stepping (non-pivot) foot has left the plate is considered a "crow hop" and is illegal.
- k. The pitcher must not continue to wind up after releasing the ball.
- l. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.
- m. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball, or after the umpire indicates, "Play Ball."

EFFECT — Sec. 3m: An additional ball is awarded the batter.

Sec. 4. INTENTIONAL WALK. If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter.

NOTE: A "pitch out" for the purpose of intentionally walking a batter is not considered an illegal pitch.

Sec. 5. DEFENSIVE POSITIONING.

- a. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch, unless all defensive players, except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box, are positioned in fair territory.

EFFECT — Sec.5a: No pitch is called. Make the defensive player(s) move into fair territory.

- b. A fielder shall not take a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.

NOTE: A pitch does not have to be released. The offending player shall be ejected from the game.

- c. With a runner on third base trying to score by means of a squeeze play or steal, no defensive player may:
 - 1. Step on, or in front of, home plate without the ball, or
 - 2. Touch the batter or bat.

EFFECT — Sec. 5c: The ball is dead. The batter shall be awarded first base on the obstruction and all runners shall advance one base on the illegal pitch.

Sec. 6. FOREIGN SUBSTANCE.

- a. The pitcher shall not, at any time during the game, be permitted to use any foreign substance on his pitching hand or fingers. Nor shall a pitcher use a ball that has foreign substance on it.

- b. Applying resin to the ball, or into the glove and then placing the ball in the glove, is an illegal act. Resin must be kept on the ground behind the pitcher's plate when not in use.
- c. Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.
- d. The pitcher shall not wear tape on his fingers, or a sweatband, bracelet, or similar type item on the wrist or forearm of the pitching arm.

EXCEPTION: A medical alert bracelet.

Sec. 7. THE CATCHER.

- a. Must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitch is released.
- b. Shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, including after a foul ball.

EFFECT — Sec. 7b: An additional ball shall be awarded to the batter.

EXCEPTION: This does not apply

- 1. After a strikeout, or
- 2. When the batter becomes a batter-runner, or
- 3. When there are runners on base, or
- 4. When a foul ball is fielded close to the foul line and the catcher throws to any base for a possible out, or
- 5. When, on a checked swing on a dropped third strike situation, the catcher throws to first base to retire the batter-runner, or
- 6. When a pitched ball deflects off the catcher's equipment or the backstop to an infielder, who returns the ball directly to the pitcher.

Sec. 8. THROWING TO A BASE. The pitcher, after he has taken the pitching position, shall not throw to a base during a live ball while his foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate. If the throw from the pitcher's plate occurs during a live ball appeal play, the appeal is cancelled.

NOTE: The pitcher may remove himself from the pitching position by stepping backwards off the pitcher's plate prior to separating his hands. Stepping forward or sideways constitutes an illegal pitch.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE EFFECT FOR ALL SECTIONS 1 - 8 ABOVE:

EFFECT — Sec. 1-8: Any infraction of Sections 1-8 is an illegal pitch. (EXCEPTION: Rules 6, Sec. 3m and Sec. 7b)

- 1. The umpire shall give a delayed dead ball signal.
- 2. If the illegal pitch is not hit
 - a) An extra ball is awarded to the batter (first base if ball four), and
 - b) Runners are advanced one base.

EXCEPTION: If a runner legally advances on the illegal pitch (passed ball or wild throw by the catcher or a wild pitch), any extra bases obtained may be retained.

- 3. If the illegal pitch is hit, the manager of the offensive team has the option of taking
 - a) The award for the illegal pitch, or
 - b) The result of the play.

EXCEPTION: If the batter hits the ball, or swings for strike three, and reaches first base safely, and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, the illegal pitch is nullified. All actions as a result of the batted ball stand and no option is given.

4. If the manager does not take the result of the play, the illegal pitch is enforced by awarding a ball to the batter (first base if ball four) and advancing all runners one base. The ball is dead.
5. When an illegal pitch hits the batter, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first base and all runners are advanced one base. No option is given.

NOTE: An illegal pitch shall be called immediately when it becomes illegal. If called by the plate umpire, it shall be called in a voice so that the batter and catcher will hear it. The plate umpire will also give the delayed dead ball signal. If called by the base umpire, it shall be called so that the nearest fielder will hear it. The base umpire will also give the delayed dead ball signal. Failure of the players to hear the call shall not nullify the illegal pitch.

Sec. 9. WARM-UP PITCHES.

- a. At the start of the game, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five pitches to the catcher or another team member. At the start of each subsequent inning, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than three pitches to the catcher or another team member.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. This does not apply if the umpire delays the start, or resumption, of play due to substitution, conference, injuries, etc.
2. The umpire can allow 5 pitches rather than 3 pitches should weather conditions warrant it.

EFFECT — Sec. 9a: For excessive warm-up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess as listed in Sec.9a.

- b. Play shall be suspended during this time.
- c. A pitcher returning to pitch in the same half inning will not be entitled to warm-up pitches.

EFFECT— Sec. 9c: A ball shall be awarded to the batter for each pitch taken.

- d. There is no limit to the number of times a player can return to the pitching position provided he has not:
 1. Left the batting order, or
 2. Been declared an illegal pitcher by the umpire.

Sec. 10. NO PITCH. No pitch shall be declared when:

- a. The pitcher pitches during a suspension of play.
- b. The pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball:
 1. Before the batter has taken his position, or
 2. When the batter is off balance as a result of a previous pitch.
- c. A runner is called out for leaving a base prior to the pitcher releasing the pitch.
- d. The pitcher pitches before a runner has retouched his base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.
- e. A player, manager, or coach:

1. Calls "Time", or
2. Employs any other word or phrase, or
3. Commits any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

EFFECT — Sec. 10a-e: The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is cancelled. A warning shall be issued to the offending team, and a repeat of this type act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

Sec. 11. DROPPED BALL. If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his delivery:

- a. A ball is declared on the batter, and
- b. The ball will remain in play, and
- c. The runners may advance at their own risk.

Sec. 12. ILLEGAL PITCHER. A pitcher, who has been declared an illegal pitcher as a result of the team exceeding the charged conference limit, may not return to the pitching position at any time for the remainder of the game.

EFFECT — Sec. 12: If the illegal pitcher has returned and has thrown one pitch, either legal or illegal, he is ejected from the game. If he is discovered prior to the next pitch, the manager of the offensive team has the option of:

1. Taking the result of the play, or
2. Having the play nullified, with runners returning to the last base held at the time of the play.

EXCEPTION: If the play was the result of the completion of the batter's turn at bat, that batter resumes batting, assuming the ball and strike count he had prior to the discovery of the illegal pitcher, with each runner returning to the base held at the time of the pitch.

RULE 6. PITCHING REGULATIONS. (Fast Pitch Only: *Male Midget, Male Junior and Male Senior Categories*)

N.B. The EFFECT for all Sections 1 - 8 follow at end of Section 8.

Sec. 1. PRELIMINARIES. Before commencing the delivery (pitch), the pitcher:

- a. May not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in his possession.
- b. Shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- c. Must have both feet on the ground within the **61.0 cm (24 inch)** length of the pitcher's plate. The hips shall be in line with first and third bases and both feet must be in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- d. Must, while standing on the plate and with the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand, take the signal, or appear to be taking a signal, from the catcher with the hands separated.
- e. Must, after taking the signal, bring his whole body to a full and complete stop with the ball held in the hand or glove with both held together in front of the body. This position must be held for not less than **one (1)** second and not more than **ten (10)** seconds before releasing the ball.

Sec. 2. STARTING THE PITCH. The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his wind-up.

Sec. 3. LEGAL DELIVERY.

- a. The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b. The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, he removes one hand from the ball, than takes a backward and forward swing, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- c. The pitcher must not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d. The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arm on the windmill pitch. However, he may drop his arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. This allows the arm to pass the hip twice.
- e. The delivery must be an underhanded motion, with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- f. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight-line position of the body.
- g. Both feet must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate **and the pivot foot must remain motionless at all times before the start of the pitch. (See 6-2)**
- h. ***The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times before the forward drag, leap or hop.***
- i. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher **may** take one step with the leading, non-pivot foot simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward toward the batter and within the **61.0-cm (24-inch)** length of the pitcher's plate. It is not a step, if the pitcher slides his foot across the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate and **there is no movement backwards.** Lifting the pivot foot off the pitcher's plate and returning it to the plate, creating a rocking motion, is an illegal act.
- j. ***The pivot foot must remain in contact with, or push off and drag away, or be airborne prior to the stepping (non-pivot) foot touching the ground.***

NOTE: *It is legal to drag, leap or hop and then land and throw as long as the original push starts from the pitcher's plate. It is not legal to step off with the pivot foot and then drag, leap, or hop and throw.*

- k. The pitcher must not continue to wind up after releasing the ball.
- l. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.
- m. The pitcher has **twenty (20)** seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball, or after the umpire indicates, "Play Ball".

EFFECT — Sec. 3m: An additional ball is awarded the batter.

Sec. 4. INTENTIONAL WALK. If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter.

NOTE: A "pitch out" for the purpose of intentionally walking a batter is not considered an illegal pitch.

Sec. 5. DEFENSIVE POSITIONING.

- b. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch, unless all defensive players, except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box, are positioned in fair territory.

EFFECT — Sec. 5a: No pitch is called. Make the defensive player(s) move into fair territory.

- b. A fielder shall not take a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.

NOTE: A pitch does not have to be released. The offending player shall be ejected from the game.

- c. With a runner on third base trying to score by means of a squeeze play or steal, no defensive player may:
 - 1. Step on, or in front of, home plate without the ball, or
 - 2. Touch the batter or bat.

EFFECT — Sec. 5c: The ball is dead. The batter shall be awarded first base on the obstruction and all runners shall advance one base on the illegal pitch.

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- c. Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.
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EXCEPTION: A medical alert bracelet.

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EFFECT — Sec. 7b: An additional ball shall be awarded to the batter.

EXCEPTION: This does not apply

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2. When the batter becomes a batter-runner, or
3. When there are runners on base, or
4. When a foul ball is fielded close to the foul line and the catcher throws to any base for a possible out, or
5. When, on a checked swing on a dropped third strike situation, the catcher throws to first base to retire the batter-runner, or
6. When a pitched ball deflects off the catcher's equipment or the backstop to an infielder, who returns the ball directly to the pitcher.

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4. If the manager does not take the result of the play, the illegal pitch is enforced by awarding a ball to the batter (first base if ball four) and advancing all runners one base. The ball is dead.
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EXCEPTIONS:

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2. The umpire can allow 5 pitches rather than 3 pitches should weather conditions warrant it.

EFFECT — Sec. 9a: For excessive warm-up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess as listed in Sec.9a.

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- c. A pitcher returning to pitch in the same half inning will not be entitled to warm-up pitches.

EFFECT— Sec. 9c: A ball shall be awarded to the batter for each pitch taken.

- d. There is no limit to the number of times a player can return to the pitching position provided he has not:
 1. Left the batting order, or
 2. Been declared an illegal pitcher by the umpire.

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- b. The pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball:
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 2. When the batter is off balance as a result of a previous pitch.
- c. A runner is called out for leaving a base prior to the pitcher releasing the pitch.
- d. The pitcher pitches before a runner has retouched his base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.
- e. A player, manager, or coach:
 1. Calls "Time", or
 2. Employs any other word or phrase, or
 3. Commits any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

EFFECT — Sec. 10a-e: The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is cancelled. A warning shall be issued to the offending team, and a repeat of this type act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

Sec. 11. DROPPED BALL. If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his delivery:

- a. A ball is declared on the batter, and

- b. The ball will remain in play, and
- c. The runners may advance at their own risk.

Sec. 12. ILLEGAL PITCHER. A pitcher, who has been declared an illegal pitcher as a result of the team exceeding the charged conference limit, may not return to the pitching position at any time for the remainder of the game.

EFFECT — Sec. 12: If the illegal pitcher has returned and has thrown one pitch, either legal or illegal, he is ejected from the game. If he is discovered prior to the next pitch, the manager of the offensive team has the option of:

- 1. Taking the result of the play, or
- 2. Having the play nullified, with runners returning to the last base held at the time of the play.

EXCEPTION: If the play was the result of the completion of the batter's turn at bat, that batter resumes batting, assuming the ball and strike count he had prior to the discovery of the illegal pitcher, with each runner returning to the base held at the time of the pitch.

Points of Emphasis - New Pitching Rule for 2004

1. **In all female categories and in all male categories up to and including Bantam, the pivot foot must remain in contact with, or push off and drag away, prior to the stepping (non-pivot) foot touching the ground.**
2. **The portion of the rule allowing the drag, leap, or hop and then throw affects ONLY the male Midget, Junior and Senior categories.**
3. **When taking the signal with the hands separated, the pitcher must start with *two (2) feet touching the pitching plate and within the 61.0 cm (24 inch) length of it.***
4. **The pivot foot must remain motionless while the hands are together during the pause and until the pitch starts. It may not be lifted up, moved sideways or dragged backward.**
5. **After the start of the pitch, any motion of the pivot foot must be forward or sideways while in contact with the pitching plate.**
6. **The pivot foot may push off from the pitching plate.**
7. **In male Midget, male Junior and male Senior categories:**
 - a. **When pushing off from the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must:**
 - 1) **Drag, leap, or hop and then throw as long as the original push is from the pitching plate.**
 - 2) **If air-born after the push from the pitching plate, he may land and throw.**

- b. He may not step from the pitching plate then push, drag, leap, or hop and throw from a point in front of or off to the side of the pitching plate.**