



2026-27 NFHS Baseball Key Rule Changes

Training reference prepared for Central Florida Umpires, Inc.
Use this handout to review the changes, effective dates, and pregame discussion points.

Training use note

This training handout is based on the key NFHS rule-change summary provided for the 2026-27 season. Officials should confirm final application with the official NFHS rules materials and applicable FHSA guidance.

Effective Dates at a Glance

2026-27 Season	Jan. 1, 2027	Jan. 1, 2028
Expanded one-way communication, eye shade, scoring device, and audio/video rules	First base option requirement: double first base or 18-inch single first base	Future non-wood bat categories with USA Baseball certification become permitted

At-a-Glance Summary

Rule / Topic	Key Change	Effective / Note
First Base Options Rule 1-2-9	Effective January 1, 2027, fields must use either a double first base or a larger single 18-inch square first base.	Effective Jan. 1, 2027
Coach-to-Player Communication Rule 1-6-2	One-way electronic communication is expanded.	2026-27 rule change
Eye Shade Regulations Rule 1-5-12	Eye shade appearance is standardized.	2026-27 rule change
Coaching and Scoring Devices Rule 3-3-1h	Scorekeeping rules in the dugout and coaches' box are modernized.	2026-27 rule change
Audio/Video Restrictions Rule 1-6-3	Live wearable broadcast technology is prohibited during play.	2026-27 rule change
Future Bat Standards Rule 1-3-2d	New non-wood bat categories are scheduled for a future effective date.	Effective Jan. 1, 2028

The changes summarized above affect field setup, equipment checks, electronic communication, wearable technology, and future bat standards. Use the detailed cards on the following pages as a crew-meeting reference.

Detailed Rule Change Training Cards

Review each card before the season and during chapter meetings. The training focus line converts the rule summary into a practical item for pregame crew discussion.

First Base Options

Rule 1-2-9

Summary: Effective January 1, 2027, fields must use either a double first base or a larger single 18-inch square first base.

Detail / Specification: The double first base is split fair/foul with white and contrasting colors. Second and third bases remain 15 inches square.

Training focus: Pregame crew focus: confirm the first-base setup and understand how it supports safety on close plays.

Coach-to-Player Communication

Rule 1-6-2

Summary: One-way electronic communication is expanded.

Detail / Specification: Coaches in the dugout can now communicate electronically with both the catcher and the pitcher; this was previously limited to catchers only.

Training focus: Pregame crew focus: know which players may receive one-way dugout communication and be ready to address questions consistently.

Eye Shade Regulations

Rule 1-5-12

Summary: Eye shade appearance is standardized.

Detail / Specification: Eye shade must be applied as one solid stroke without symbols, may not extend past the eye socket width, and may not extend below the cheekbone.

Training focus: Pregame crew focus: identify non-compliant eye shade before play when possible and apply the standard consistently.

Coaching and Scoring Devices

Rule 3-3-1h

Summary: Scorekeeping rules in the dugout and coaches' box are modernized.

Detail / Specification: Handheld electronic scoring devices are officially permitted in the coach's box.

Training focus: Pregame crew focus: distinguish permitted scoring devices from devices or uses that may fall under other restrictions.

Audio/Video Restrictions

Rule 1-6-3

Summary: Live wearable broadcast technology is prohibited during play.

Detail / Specification: Players cannot wear audio microphones or video cameras during games. The enforcement sequence listed in the provided summary is team warning first, then ejection.

Training focus: Pregame crew focus: address live wearable microphones or cameras before play and know the listed penalty sequence.

Future Bat Standards

Rule 1-3-2d

Summary: New non-wood bat categories are scheduled for a future effective date.

Detail / Specification: Effective January 1, 2028, new non-wood bat categories with USA Baseball certification (-4, -5, -6) will be permitted.

Training focus: Pregame crew focus: note the future effective date and avoid applying the 2028 standard before it becomes effective.

Pregame Review Checklist

- ☐ Confirm whether the field uses a compliant first-base option when the 2027 requirement applies.
- ☐ Discuss one-way coach-to-player communication and identify who may receive it.
- ☐ Look for eye shade that includes symbols or extends beyond the permitted area.
- ☐ Know that handheld electronic scoring devices are permitted in the coach's box.
- ☐ Address live wearable microphones or video cameras before play when possible.
- ☐ Remember the future effective date for the new non-wood bat categories.
- ☐ Apply any local, association, FHSA, or state-adoption guidance consistently with official rule materials.

Chapter Discussion Prompts

Topic	Discussion Prompt
Field setup	How should the crew handle a field that does not match the required first-base option after January 1, 2027?
Communication devices	What pregame questions should be asked when a team uses electronic communication with the pitcher or catcher?
Equipment and appearance	What is the cleanest way to address non-compliant eye shade before the game starts?
Technology restrictions	How should the crew communicate and document a wearable audio/video issue if it occurs during play?