

2003 Approved Baseball Rule Changes

Rules Reference	
1-2-5 (new)	<p>New Rule: It is recommended that when the dugout area is extended, for any reason, it shall be extended toward the outfield on a line parallel to the foul line. The extension of the dugout area shall be equally applied for both teams.</p> <p>Rationale: Dugout areas are being extended closer to the foul lines and home plate causing concern over liability issues. Also, this is providing greater opportunities for unsportsmanlike actions to occur.</p>
2-29-6 (new)	<p>A defensive appeal of a runner failing to touch a base or tag up is not a play.</p> <p>Rationale: To make the distinction that an appeal is not a play.</p>
3-3-1i	<p>Add to the rule: have any object in his possession in the coach's box other than a rule book, scorebook, a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or comparable electronic score-recording device which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only;</p> <p>Rationale: To allow a coach the flexibility to use a traditional scorebook or a comparable electronic device.</p>
3-3-2	<p>Revise last line: He may return when requested by an umpire to attend to an ill or injured player.</p> <p>Rationale: The committee felt it was not appropriate for an ejected coach to arbitrarily return to the playing area unless specifically requested by an umpire.</p>
5-2-2b Exception	<p>Change rule to: A runner who is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball became dead, or advances and touches a succeeding base after the ball became dead, may not return and shall be called out upon proper and successful appeal.</p> <p>Rationale: Brings this ruling in alignment with appeal rule instituted in 2001.</p>
8-2-5	<p>Add to the rule: If a runner who misses any base (including home plate) or leaves a base too early, desires to return to touch the base, he must do so immediately. If the ball becomes dead and the runner is on or beyond a succeeding base, he cannot return to the missed base and, therefore, is subject to being declared out upon proper and successful appeal.</p> <p>Rationale: Recommended in order to clean up affected rules from last year's rule change.</p>
8-2 Penalty (Art. 1-5)	<p>For failure to touch a base (advancing and returning), or failure to tag up as soon as the ball is touched on a caught fly ball, the runner may be called out if an appeal is made by the defensive team. The defense may appeal during a live ball immediately following the play and before a pitch (legal or illegal), granting an intentional base on balls, or before the next play or attempted play. If the offensive team initiates a play before the next pitch, the defensive team does not lose the right to appeal. A live ball appeal may be made by a defensive player with the ball in his possession by tagging the runner or touching the base that was missed or left too early. A dead ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player with or without the ball by verbally stating that the runner missed the base or left the base too early. Appeals must be made (1) before the next legal or illegal pitch, (2) at the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory, (3) before an intentional base on balls is granted, or (4) on the last play of the game, an appeal can be made until the umpires leave the field of play. NOTE: When a play by its very nature is imminent and is obvious to the offense, defense and umpire(s), no verbal appeal is necessary, e.g. runner attempting to retouch a base that was missed, or a failure to tag up and a throw has been made to that base or plate while a play is in progress.</p> <p>Rationale: Prevents the defense from intentionally walking batters it does not want to face and then appealing a missed base. Preventing the defense from making pick-off plays and then appealing a missed base. Will allow defense to appeal if offense initiates a play (i.e. stealing a base). A defensive coach shall verbally appeal only during a dead ball situation.</p>

8-4-2i	<p>Add to the end of the rule: does not retouch his base before a fielder tags him out or holds the ball while touching such base after any situation (8-2-1,2,3 and 4). Umpire may also call him out at end of playing action upon proper and successful appeal. Also, it is not necessary for runner to retouch his base after a foul tip (2-16-2); or</p> <p>Rationale: Recommended in order to clean up affected rules from last year's rule change.</p>
8-4-2q	<p>Add to the end of the rule: ...is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball is declared dead (5-2-2b exception) after having left a base too soon on a caught fly ball, or he failed to touch a preceding base, or he continues and touches a succeeding base after the ball has become dead, and the defense initiates a proper and successful appeal.</p> <p>Rationale: Clarification that the runner is not automatically out at the end of all playing action unless defense makes proper appeal.</p>

Major Editorial Rule Changes

8-4-2f	<p>f. as a runner or retired runner, fails to execute a legal slide, or <i>does not</i> attempt to avoid the fielder or the play on a force play at any base; or</p> <p>Rationale: This is an editorial change in order to correct a previously omitted phrase.</p>
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Minor Editorial Rule Changes

2-19-1	<p>Add to the rule: ...(rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to <i>attempt to</i> make the catch)...</p> <p>Rationale: This is an editorial change to discern the outfielder's ability to attempt to make a catch.</p>
3-1-2 Note	<p>Delete "c" from rule reference 6-2-2c.</p> <p>Rationale: There is no 6-2-2c exception.</p>