

NFHS Softball Rules Changes 2026

July 09, 2025

1-9-6: No player shall transmit or record audio or video from the playing surface. New language further clarifies the use of electronic devices and what is not permitted.

Rationale: This change clearly defines the types of electronic devices prohibited by the rule.

Rule 8: Rule 8 has been reformatted for clarity. Changes have separated longer articles, and organized exceptions, penalties, and effects into outline format for improved comprehension.

Rationale: Added article references to PENALTIES and EFFECTS, and Section 4 was separated into two sections addressing runners entitled to advance with and without liability to be put out to delineate differences.

10-4-2: Effective January 1, 2027, heather gray umpire pants will no longer be permitted. NFHS umpire slacks may either be charcoal gray or navy blue. The heather gray option was stricken from the rules book.

Rationale: Manufacturers have discontinued producing heather gray umpire pants. This change will assist umpires in the purchase of pants that are currently being manufactured.

2026 SOFTBALL EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-3-3, 1-6-3 a & b, 2-25-3, 4-3-2, 7-1-1, 7-2-2, 8-2-12 PENALTY 2, 8-7-PENALTIES (Art. 10 through 14) (2)

2026 SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Obstruction
2. Maintaining an Unobstructed View