

Changes to Official Baseball Rules (OBR) for 2010

The Playing Rules Committee made the following changes that will be in effect for the 2010 season:

1. Revised rule on playing field layout to update practices on marking foul lines. (Rule 1.04)
2. Revised rule on playing field layout to update base material. (Rule 1.06)
3. Revised diagram of field layout to provide that front and back lines of coach's boxes may be a minimum of one foot in length and a maximum of 10 feet in length. (Diagram No. 1)
4. Reduced maximum bat diameter to 2.61 inches. (Rule 1.10(a))
5. Required cupped portion of bat, if any, to be free of right angles. (Rule 1.10(b))
6. Added comment to address consequences of using bat with excessive pine tar. (Rule 1.10(c) Comment)
7. Revised rule on the use of helmets to require helmets while running the bases; update the requirement for Major League batters to use at least a single ear-flap helmet; require base coaches to wear helmets while performing their duties; and require bat/ball boys and girls to wear double ear-flap helmets while performing their duties. (Rule 1.16)
8. Added rules on substituted-for player who improperly remains in game. (Rule 3.03 and 3.03 Comment)
9. Revised rule on game preliminaries to provide that home team (rather than home team manager) determines whether a game shall not be started because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field. (Rule 3.10(a))
10. Revised lineup-card rules to allow a manager's designee to present lineup card and provide that positions and substitutes should be listed as a courtesy. (Rule 4.01)
11. Clarified that umpire interference may occur on a pick-off play or when a catcher returns the ball to the pitcher. (Rules 2.00 (Interference) (c), 2.00 (Interference) (c) Comment, 5.09(b) and 5.09(b) Comment)
12. Clarified language in rule on interference by a runner. (Rule 5.09(f))
13. Clarified rules on a ball that deflects to hit a batter or a bat while the batter is in a legal position in the batter's box and has not intended to interfere with the course of the ball. (Rules 6.05(g) and 6.05(h))
14. Revised Designated Hitter Rule to provide for remedies when a team lists 10 players on its lineup card but fails to indicate a Designated Hitter. (Rule 6.10(b)(1), 6.10(b)(1) Comment and 6.10(b)(11))
15. Revised Designated Hitter Rule to provide that a team's Designated Hitter role terminates when a player on defense replaces the pitcher. (Rule 6.10(b)(14))
16. Revised Designated Hitter Rule to restrict appearance of Designated Hitter in bullpen. (Rule 6.10(b)(15))
17. Reorganized rule on runner advancing when a fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. (Rule 7.04(e))
18. Revised language of rule on putting out forced runner. (Rule 7.08(e))
19. Revised rule on pitchers to allow pitcher to touch his mouth or lips on mound, so long as he is not in contact with pitcher's plate when doing so and so long as he clearly wipes the fingers of his pitching hand dry before touching the pitcher's plate. (Rule 8.02(a)(1))
20. Revised rule on reversing a call after umpire crew consultation to empower umpires explicitly to take whatever steps they may deem necessary, in their discretion, to eliminate the results and consequences of an earlier call that they are reversing. (Rule 9.02(c) and 9.02(c) Comment)
21. • Made stylistic revisions in Rules 1.10(c), 2.00 (Interference) (a) Comment, 3.10(a), 6.10(a), 6.10(b), 8.01(a)(1)