

DZ Tournament Playing Rules 2026

	9U	10U	11U	12U	13U
Governing Rules	NFHS Rulebook 2026 Unless noted below:				
Min/Max # of Players	All games must begin and end with eight (8) defensive players regardless of reason for absent players. A team must play with a minimum of eight (8) defensive players to complete the game. If the number of defensive players available is less than eight (8), the game will be recorded as a forfeit regardless of the score of the game at the time of the absence of the player. No more than 14 players per team. If a team has more than 14 please contact a director before the tournament has begun.				
Chatter	Any behavior which is deemed by an umpire or tournament official to be intentionally distracting to a pitcher, batter, or fielder may result in one warning. Subsequent incidents may result in the manager being ejected and/or the team forfeiting the game.				
Abusive Language	Unsportsmanlike conduct or any use of inappropriate language by a coach, player, or parent toward another team, official, tournament director, or UIC will not be tolerated and will be asked to leave the park.				
Player Safety	Throwing bats, helmets, gloves, or any other equipment in a dangerous or unsportsmanlike manner is strictly prohibited. Umpires have full discretion to determine if thrown equipment poses a safety risk or violates sportsmanship standards. First offense: Warning Second offense or severe first offense: Automatic out (if applicable) or ejection. NOTE: If an umpire calls a player out, it is a delayed dead ball. Play stands.				
Maximum # of Innings	6 innings				7 Innings
Complete Game	4 innings (3-1/2 innings if home team is winning) Or determined by time limit. If a game is called due to weather prior to the time limit and the required innings for a complete game.				
Game Time Limit	Pool Play, Bracket Play, and Consolation Games 1hr and 35 minutes No New Inning A new inning can not begin after the time limit. A new inning begins immediately after the third out of the previous inning. During weather delays, the clock is suspended until play restarts.				
	There is no time limit in the championship				
Mercy Rule	12 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 8 runs after 5 innings				
Maximum Runs/Inning	5 runs per inning This is the maximum runs that can be recorded per inning. This rule does NOT apply to the 6th inning. If a game reaches the time limit and it is not the 6th inning, there will still be a 5 run limit.	Unlimited			
Tie games	Ties are allowed in Pool Play.				
	Ties are not allowed in bracket play. If time limit occurs while there is tie, extra innings will begin with the last recorded out on 2nd, starting with one out recorded. (CHAMPIONSHIP WILL NOT USE THIS RULE, EXTRA INNINGS WILL PLAY NORMAL RULES)				
Pitching:	Once the pitcher is removed from the mound, s/he may not return to pitch. Extra Innings can allow a pitcher who has already pitched to pitch again until they are again removed from the mound.				
	No pitching limits will be required for this tournament per game or per weekend. We expect that the coaches will monitor pitch count and rest durations appropriate with their players best interests.				
Mound Visits	Upon the coach’s second trip to the mound in one inning or third trip to the mound for the same pitcher in one game, the pitcher must be removed from the mound				
Balk Warnings	Unlimited - Instructional per umpire discretion			No Warnings	
Hit Batter Limitation	For all games a maximum of 3 hit batters/pitcher/game can occur. The pitcher is removed from the pitching position immediately after the 3rd hit batter. Players may remain in game unless determined to be intentional per umpire discretion. This player additionally cannot pitch in extra innings.				
Stealing/ Lead Offs	Runners can lead off and steal at any time				
Base Running:	Runners can lead off and steal at any time				
Stealing Home	Runners can steal home once per inning on a pitcher catcher exchange. ALL other situations permit a runner to steal home.	Stealing Home is allowed			
Slash Bunt	No Slash Bunts allowed: There will be no warnings for this, it will be a dead ball, batter is out, and runners return to their bases at time of pitch. Definition of a Slash bunt: The act of a batter showing a bunt, then pulling back to take a full swing.				Slash bunts are permitted

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Sliding	Runners are NOT required to slide, but are encouraged to do so. <u>Any intentional or reckless contact by a player, including but not limited to malicious slides or collisions, will result in immediate ejection, at the umpire’s discretion.</u>				
Roster/Players	Once the tournament starts and the final roster has been submitted, teams cannot add players to their roster (maximum roster size is 14 players) Free substitutions / Continuous batting roster				
Minimum / Maximum # of Hitters in Line-up	All Uniformed Players Hit, Continuous batting order				
Minimum Defensive	No requirements for defensive innings played.				
4 th Outfielder	NOT APPLICABLE				
Absent Without Injury or Illness	If a player is a hitter in the batting order, this position will be declared an 'out' should this player become absent during the game for a reason other than injury or illness. Another player may replace the absent player defensively but may not hit in the absent player's position in the line-up.				
Absent with Injury or Illness	If a player is removed from a game due to injury or illness, his/her position in the batting order will be skipped and will not be considered an out. The injured or ill player may not re-enter the game once their position in the batting order is skipped.				
Equipment:	Coaches are responsible to check their own/players equipment				
Bat Restrictions:	*USSSA Rules Apply. The maximum diameter shall not exceed 2-3/4 inches and the maximum length shall not exceed 36 inches. Bats should not exceed the 1.15 BPF (Bat Performance Factor) as defined for baseball bats by ASTM Standards. (8U-12U @ -10, 13U @ -8, 14/15U @ -5/BBCOR/Wood) *Big barrel bats (diameters of 2-5/8" or 2-3/4") must have the USSSA 1.15 BPF or USA Baseball mark. Older big barrel bats will not be allowed. *Small barrel bats (diameter of 2-1/2") must have the USSSA 1.15 BPF or USA Baseball mark as well. Older small barrel bats will not be allowed. *NFHS Rules Apply. Any solid (one-piece) wood baseball bat will be legal. The only legal non-wood bats will be BBCOR-certified baseball bats. The bat may not exceed minus three (-3) in differential between length and weight				
Cleats/Shoes	Plastic or Rubber Cleats only, no metal				Plastic or Metal Allowed
Courtesy Runner for Pitcher and/or Catcher	At any time, a courtesy runner for the catcher or pitcher of record may be used. It must be the player who made the last recorded out. NOTE: This rule may be used for the player's previous defensive inning or next defensive half inning.				
Field Dimensions:					
Pitching Distance	46' 0"	46' 0"	50' 0"	50' 0"	54' 0"
Base Distance	65' 0"	65' 0"	70' 0"	70' 0"	80' 0"
	If the field dimensions are found to be incorrect after play has started, corrections to the field should be made at the end of the current inning.				
Drop 3rd Strike Rule Applies?	No. On a dropped 3rd strike, the batter is out and the ball is live.	Yes			
Infield Fly Rule Applies?	Yes				

- Miscellaneous Rules ALL DIVISIONS:
- Scores will be collected on score sheets by umpires and turned into Tournament Director.
 - MAX runs allowed for tournament score on mercies is 15 Runs (I.E. Score is 30-3, tmnt will use 18-3 for tally)
 - Scores will be recorded on score cards by umpires.
 - No Home or Away dugouts, it is first come first serve.
 - Pool play home and away teams will be determined by coin flip.

Tie Breaker for Pool Play

- 1) Best Record
- 2) Head to Head - (If three or more teams are tied this will be skipped)
- 3) Runs Allowed
- 4) Run Differential
- 5) Total Runs Scored
- 6) Coin Flip