



NFHS RULES CHANGES AFFECTING RISK  
(1982-2010)

**Baseball**

- 1982 Batting helmets meeting NOCSAE Standard to be required in 1985.
- Slippery tape on bat handles is illegal.
- 1983 Any player warming up a pitcher at any location shall wear a protective cup and a mask with a throat protector
- Casts, splints or braces must be padded and there shall be no exposed metal or any other hard material. Prosthesis that is not dangerous will be permitted.
- 1984 Any on-deck batter is required to wear a batting helmet. Protective devices attached to a batting helmet must be approved by the state association.
- Nontraditional playing equipment must be reviewed by the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee before it will be permitted.
- A player who maliciously runs into a fielder is to be ejected and shall also be called out.
- Metal cleats were prohibited.
- 1985 Devices or attachments that cause bat handles to become flush with the knob are illegal.
- Only bats may be used in loosening up.
- 1986 Exterior warning label is mandatory on batting helmets.
- Players in coaches' boxes required to wear a head protector.
- Jewelry is prohibited. Medical-alert bracelets or medical-alert necklaces are legal if taped to the body.
- 1987 Bases with tapered edges are permitted.
- On-deck circles should be placed 37' away from home plate if space permits. Otherwise, they should be placed a safe distance to the side and away from home plate.
- 1988 Bases designed to disengage their anchor systems for safety purposes are legal.
- 1989 Metal cleats are permitted.
- 1989 By state association adoption, a double first base is permitted.
- 1990 State association required to establish pitching limitations, i.e., how much and when a pitcher can pitch.

## **Baseball**

- 1991 Umpires prohibited from umpiring when mobility is restricted by equipment such as crutches, canes, wheelchairs or other mobility aids.
- 1992 Any runner who scores or who is put out shall wear a batting helmet while the ball is alive and in live ball area.
- Bats are restricted by weight to length.
- 1993 Non-adult bat/ball shaggers to wear batting helmets while in live ball territory.
- Media prohibited from being in live ball area.
- Players loosening up to bat shall remain in the area of the on-deck circle while pitcher is warming up.
- 1994 Blood rule adopted.
- Diving over a fielder is prohibited.
- 1995 Bandannas are prohibited.
- Tobacco or tobacco-like products are prohibited from being used by players, coaches and umpires.
- 1996 Any player warming up to the pitcher shall wear a head protector.
- 1997 Neither team shall leave its dugout or bench area while the pre game conference is being conducted.
- 1998 On a force play, the runner shall slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases, or away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder.
- Team personnel who leave their positions or bench area for the purpose of fighting or physical confrontation shall be ejected.
- 1999 Beginning 2003, the catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard. The coefficient of restitution (COR) for baseballs was established not to exceed .555.
- 2000 Bat standard was modified. The diameter shall be 2 5/8 inches or less and shall not weigh more than three ounces less than the length of the bat.
- 2001 Bat standard was modified effective January 1, 2003, that all non-wood bats must meet BESR standards, which includes the diameter shall be 2 5/8 inches or less and shall not weigh more than three ounces less than the length of the bat, the maximum ball exit speed shall not exceed 97 miles per hour and the bat must meet the moment-of-inertia requirement.
- 2002 Umpires and coaches are permitted to use crutches, canes, wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Beginning January 1, 2003, catcher's helmets must have dual ear flaps in order to qualify for NOCSAE approval. All casts, splits and braces must be padded with at least one-half inch of closed cell, slow recovery rubber or other material of the same thickness and having similar physical properties.
- 2003 No changes for this school year.

## **Baseball**

- 2004 Catcher's helmet and mask combination must meet the NOCSAE standard. Any helmet or helmet and mask combination shall have dual ear flaps. A pitcher can wear a head or face protector as long as its entire cover shall have a non-glare surface.
- 2005 Beginning with the 2006 season, defensive players are allowed to wear face and eye protection
- 2006 Beginning in 2007, whenever team members are loosening up in an area that is not protected by a fence or other structure, other members of the team with a glove must be positioned between them and the batter to protect them from batted or thrown ball within the confines of the playing field. The umpire-in-chief's equipment is identified as required when he is behind the plate. He shall wear but not limited to; chest protector, face mask, throat guard, plate shoes, shin guards and protective cup if male.
- 2007 Recommended that if a dugout/bench is extended, then it should be extended toward the outfield on a line parallel to the foul lines. Several Points of Emphasis were drafted to bring attention to batters not be rewarded for allowing themselves to be hit by a pitched ball and encouraging coaches not to be out of the dugout/bench area sitting on an upside down bucket, or chair.
- 2008 Several Points of Emphasis were drafted to bring attention to batters not be rewarded for allowing themselves to be hit by a pitched ball and encouraging coaches not to be out of the dugout/bench area sitting on an upside down bucket, or chair. In addition, obstruction is addressed as an act that is not tolerated and the defensive team will be penalized.
- 2009 No safety rule changes.
- 2010 Modified the bat rule involving composite baseball bats (effective 2010-11 school year) and defining the various components of baseball bats and the prohibition of altering bats. Clarified the use of hard and unyielding materials for injury padding purposes. Clarified the importance of identifying the sign, symptoms or behavior of a player who has suffered a concussion. The following Points of Emphasis were drafted: Rolling and Altering of Bats; Checking Bats and Other Equipment; Concussion Recognition and Management; and Lightning Safety.

## **Softball**

- 1982 Throat protector is required on catcher's masks.
- 1983 Coach shall be responsible for having male catcher wear cup.
- Casts, splints and braces must be padded. Any equipment judged by umpire to be hazardous is illegal.
- Slippery tape on bats is illegal.
- Weighted attachments on the bat, including batting donuts, are illegal and shall not be used in loosening up.
- 1984 On-deck batters must also wear batting helmets.
- Any player warming up a pitcher at any location shall wear a mask with a throat protector
- 1984 When available, it is recommended that on-deck batters, batters and runners wear only those batting helmets carrying the NOCSAE stamp indicating it meets the NOCSAE standard.
- 1984 If a protective device attached to a batting helmet is necessary, it must be approved by the state association.

## Softball

- 1985 Batting helmets must be worn by any player occupying a coaches' box.
- All jewelry, not just exposed, is prohibited.
- On-deck batter, batter and runners shall wear batting helmet that carries the NOCSAE stamp.
- 1986 Exterior warning label required on batting helmets.
- Medical-alert bracelets or medical-alert necklaces not considered jewelry.
- 1987 Bases may have tapered edges.
- 1988 On-deck circles shall be a safe distance to the side and away from home plate.
- Bases designed to disengage their anchor systems for safety purposes are permitted.
- 1989 Plastic visors are prohibited.
- 1991 No catch is allowed if a player touches dead-ball territory before making a catch.
- Umpires are prohibited from umpiring when mobility is restricted by equipment such as crutches, canes, wheelchairs or other mobility aids.
- 1992 Any runner who is put out shall wear a batting helmet while the ball is alive and in live ball area.
- 1993 Nonadult bat/ball shaggers to wear batting helmets in live ball territory.
- Metal pitching toe plates are prohibited.
- 1994 (F.P) Nonadult warming up pitcher within confines of field required to wear a mask and throat protector.
- Player may warm up with no more than two bats.
- Blood rule adopted.
- 1995 Tobacco products are prohibited from being used by coaches, players and umpires.
- 1996 Bandannas are prohibited.
- 1998 Balls shall not be hit or thrown in the infield area (fair or foul territory) during the pre-game meeting. Team personnel who leave their positions or bench area when a fight has broken out shall be ejected.
- 1999 The catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard.
- By state association adoption, the pitching distance in slow pitch softball when using a 12-inch ball shall be 50 feet.
- 1999 Beginning January1, 2001, the coefficient of restitution for slow and fast pitch softball shall not exceed .47.
- Beginning January 1, 2001, the load force required to compress the ball .025 inches shall not exceed 525 pounds when such ball is manufactured in accordance with the ASTM test method of measuring compression-displacement of softballs.

## Softball

- 2000 The required date for the catcher's helmet and mask combination to meet the NOCSAE standard has been extended to January 1, 2003.
- Balls prohibited from being hit or thrown in live ball territory (fair or foul territory) during the pregame conference meeting.
- Electronic communication devices added to the list of equipment prohibited for coaching purposes during the course of the game.
- A fielder is prohibited from leaving the field of play with one or both feet after a catch is made.
- 2001 Requires a catcher to wear a head protection with double earflaps.  
Beginning January 1, 2003, the catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard and have full ear protection (dual earflaps).
- 2002 New sub-article added indicating that players shall wear their uniforms properly and as designed.
- 2003 Effective January 1, 2004, the COR and compression for slow pitch softballs shall not exceed .44 and 375 lbs., respectively; the compression for fast pitch softballs shall not exceed 375 lbs. All softballs shall be marked with COR and compression.
- 2004 Effective January 1, 2004, the bat shall meet the ASA 2004 Bat Performance Standard.
- 2005 Effective January 1, 2006, all fast pitch-batting helmets shall be equipped with a NOCSAE approved face mask/guard.
- 2006 The head coach is now required to attend the pregame conference and verify the team is legally and properly equipped. Penalty has been established for non-compliance. First offense results in a team warning, subsequent offense results in the offender and the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench.
- If a participant intentionally removes a boundary line, a strike or ball shall be called on the batter for an infraction by the offense or defense, respectively. A team warning shall also be issued to the head coach. Any subsequent infraction will result in the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game.
- Language added to clarify that softballs and bats may not be altered from their originally manufactured legal state by using any treatment or device.
- A new article was added to clarify that players may wear face/head protection in the field.
- (F.P.) Any non-adult warming up a pitcher at any location within the confines of the field shall wear an approved catcher's helmet and mask combination a mask and throat protector.
- 2007 Established guidelines for interference and obstruction when contact occurs between a base runner and a fielder on a non-controlled batted ball. A new definition for an "Initial Play" was also created.
- 2008 Players permitted to wear metal cleats and metal toe plates.
- Requires the batter to take her position in the batter's box within 10 seconds after the ball is required to the pitcher in the circle.

## **Softball**

- 2009 Added to the softball specifications a requirement that the dynamic stiffness of softballs not exceed 7,500 lbs/inch when tested under current proposed ASTM test methods. Effective January 1, 2010.
- Clarified that if an eye shield is worn attached to the catcher's helmet, it must be constructed of a molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100 percent (no tint) allowable light transmission.
- POE – Reduction in obstruction/interference
- 2010 Changed the female fast-pitch pitching distance to 43 feet effective with the 2010-11 academic year.  
NOTE: Individual state associations are permitted to adopt the 43-foot distance in 2009-10, if desired.
- Identified and specified guidelines for each part of the bat, including: knob, handle/grip, taper, barrel and end cap. In addition, the rule clarifies that the taper must be a solid surface.
- P.O.E. - Illegal pitch enforcement  
Three-foot running lane  
Non-traditional game equipment
- 2011 Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- Changed that intent need not be the determining factor in ruling whether interference has occurred by a runner who has scored/been retired.
- Clarified the padding requirements for guards, casts and braces.
- P.O.E. - Team and Player Equipment; Field of Play

## **Basketball**

- 1982 Modified movable-ring specifications.
- 1983 Extended player control foul to include airborne shooter.
- 1984 Added loss of ball to the penalty for flagrant personal foul.
- A player may grasp the ring to prevent injury if fouled in the act of shooting or dunking.
- 1985 Allows any fouled player to grasp the ring to prevent injury.
- 1986 Allows use of 3 ½" x 6' rectangular backboard; adopted new padding specifications for rectangular backboards.
- 1987 Technical foul for pregame dunking also is charged to the head coach.
- 1988 Allows each state association to approve artificial limbs.
- 1989 Basket interference to reach through the basket from below and touch the ball outside the cylinder.
- 1990 A player may not lift a teammate to secure a greater height.
- 1991 Basket ring must be secured by a ring-restraining device.
- Any player may grasp the basket to prevent injury.

## **Basketball**

Unconscious player may not return in game without physician's written authorization.

1991 Compression shorts may be worn.

1992 Injured player must be removed until next opportunity for such player to return.

State associations may approve headwear for medical reasons.

1993 A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has excessive blood on uniform must leave game to receive appropriate treatment.

1994 Referee is authorized to deal with safety concerns relative to fingernails and hair styles.

1995 Tobacco use prohibited.

Disqualification to leave bench area during a fight.

1996 No changes in "safety" rules.

1997 No changes in "safety" rules

1998 Players may not lock arms or grasp a teammate to restrict movement of an opponent

1999 No change in "safety" rules

2000 Coach must verify that all players are properly equipped.

2001 Officials will address coaches and captains concerning good sportsmanship at the pre-game conference.

Twenty-second (20) time-outs increased to thirty (30) seconds.

Illegal contact on the backboard clarified by stating that a player shall not:

- b. place a hand on the backboard or ring to gain an advantage while a try or tap is in flight or is touching the backboard or is in the basket or in the cylinder above the basket, intentionally slap or strike the backboard or cause the ring to vibrate.

2001-02 The referee shall not permit any "team member" to wear equipment or apparel which, in his/her judgment, is dangerous or confusing to other players or is not appropriate. This includes the pre-game warm-up period.

The playing of music/sound effects shall only be permitted during pre-game, time-outs, intermission and post game. The use of artificial noisemakers shall be prohibited.

2002-03 A player who is required to leave the game for blood or injury is permitted to remain in the game if the team calls a time-out and the situation can be corrected by the resumption of play.

2003-04 Further defined basket interference to include when a player pulls down a movable ring so that it contacts the ball before the ring returns to its original position.

A state association by adoption may institute a running clock when a specified point differential is reached at a specified time in the game.

## **Basketball**

Reduced the number of players permitted on marked lane spaces during free throws (not including the free-thrower) to four defensive and two offensive players, with the lane spaces closest to the free-throw line (and the shooter) remaining vacant.

2004-05 None

2005-06 Prohibits a team member from removing his/her jersey and/or pants/skirt within the visual confines of the playing area. The penalty is a technical foul.

Changed the penalty for leaving the court for an unauthorized reason to a violation from a technical foul.

Clarified the definition of an intentional foul.

2006-07 None

2007-08 Changed the warning horn for a 30-second time-out to be sounded with 15 seconds remaining.  
Changed the replacement interval for a disqualified or injured player to 20 seconds, with a warning horn sounded with 15 seconds remaining.  
Added that guards, casts, braces and compression sleeves must be worn for medical reasons.  
Clarified that hard items worn on the head, such as barrettes and bobby pins, are prohibited.

2008-09 During a free throw, all players will move up one marked lane space, leaving the two spaces closest to the end line vacant. A new mark (2 inches by 8 inches) must be reapplied to the lane line near the free-throw line to designate the last 3-foot marked lane space.

POE – Reduction in rough play.

2009-10 A note was added to clarify when the 20-second interval begins to replace an injured player.

Clarified that any item, in the referee's judgment, that constitutes a safety concern is not permitted.

Clarified that a player leaves a marked lane space when he or she contacts any part of the court outside the marked lane space (36 inches by 36 inches).

Clarified that a player occupying a marked lane space must have one foot positioned near the outer edge of the free-throw lane line with the other foot positioned anywhere within the designated 36 inch lane space.

P.O.E'S – Closely guarded

Three-seconds (including rough post play)

Guarding principles (block-charge)

Free-Throw Administration

2010-11 Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.

Clarified the requirements for guards, casts and braces and that a protective face mask shall be worn molded to the face.

P.O.E.'s – Rules Enforcement; Perimeter Play; Closely-guarded Situations; Principle of Verticality



**Field  
Hockey**

- 1982 A goalkeeper may wear a mask or mask-helmet if it is fiberglass, plastic or fiberglass/plastic coated.  
Clarifies dangerous play, including hazardous stick usage and aerial balls.
- 1983 Allows goalkeeper to wear a throat protector if it is either a part of or attached to a mask.
- 1983 States that after a player becomes injured, if that player is unable to play momentarily, she shall leave the field and the team may substitute for her.  
Reinstated “sticks” as a foul.  
Specifies that a free hit into the striking circle could not be above knee level.
- 1984 Clarify definition of “sticks.”
- 1985 Requires field players to wear mouth protectors with no protruding parts.  
Requires goalkeeper to wear a full face mask, cage mask or mask-helmet.  
Permits one team time-out per half.
- 1986 If mouth protectors are attached to material which is worn around the neck, it must be tear-away material.  
Specify protective devices worn on parts of the body other than the head/face must be padded with at least ¼” (closed cell, slow recovery) foam-rubber padding.
- 1987 Mouth protectors may not be attached to material worn around the neck.
- 1989 Stick shall be one piece and made of wood and/or fiberglass.
- 1990 Shinguards required for all players.  
Field players may not play the ball while he/she is on the ground (including kneeling), if in the judgment of the official; it could lead to dangerous play.
- 1991 Establishes a “team line” 5 yards away from sideline; requires all team personnel to remain behind the team line.
- 1992 Goalkeeper required to wear full-face mask and chest protector.
- 1993 Goalkeepers required to wear full face mask/cage/helmet (covering entire head) and field hockey goalie gloves.  
If field player wears face mask, it must be molded to the face and not attached to any hard, unyielding headgear.
- 1994 Cages on goalkeeper helmets must be rounded at all points.
- 1995 Goalkeeper required to wear throat protector.

**Field  
Hockey**

Only legal strokes on a side-in or a long hit are a drive or push.

Hand stop prohibited.

1996 Specifically allow field players to wear eye protection and soft headgear, and goalkeepers to wear field hockey shoulder pads and elbow pads.

1996 If the shot on goal is a drive, the ball must cross the goal line at a height of no more than 18 inches unless it touches the stick/body of a defender as it travels toward the goal.

1997 Only legal stroke on a 16-yard hit is a drive or a push.

On a center pass, side-in, 16-yard hit, long hit and free hit, the ball must move at least one yard before a teammate may play the ball.

When a side-in, 17-yard hit, long hit or free hit is taken between the 25-yard line and the end line, ALL players must be 5 yards away.

Penalty corner must be taken 10 yards outside the goal post.

1998 Goalkeeper must wear a wrap-around type throat protector

Goalkeeper may wear foam hand protectors which are no more than 9 inches wide and 14 inches long.

1999 No safety rule changes.

2000 No safety rule changes

2001 Goalkeepers shall wear mouth protectors.

Sticks with metal components are prohibited.

Each state association may authorize the use of artificial limbs, which in its opinion are not more dangerous to players than the corresponding human limb and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage. If the prosthesis is hinged, the hinge shall be covered so that no hard or unyielding surfaces are exposed.

Equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn.

2002 Goalkeepers may not play outside their own half of the field unless they are taking a penalty stroke.

2003 A face mask may be worn provided it is molded to the face and rounded at all points, without sharp edges. It shall not be attached to any hard, unyielding headgear (even if padded).

No shot at goal shall be made by an attacker from the penalty corner hit or from a pass or deflection by a teammate unless the ball is first controlled by the attack, has traveled more than 5 yards from the circle or has ceased to move on its own.

If the first shot on goal is a drive or hit, the ball must cross the goal line at a height of no more than 18 inches, unless it touches the stick or body of a defender and/or the stick of an attacker as it travels toward goal, or had traveled more than 5 yards from the circle prior to the shot.

## Field Hockey

- 2004 No changes
- 2005 Beginning with the 2006 season, a mouth guard must be a readily visible color other than white or clear
- 2005 Effective January 1, 2007, the player's stick shall weigh no more than 23 ounces, not to exceed a bow of 25mm, and must pass through a 2-inch ring. Sticks with metal components are illegal.
- A chest protector specifically manufactured for field hockey goalkeepers to be worn under the shirt
- All approved eyewear must have a certification mark denoting it meets the ASTM F803 standard
- 2006 Sticks that are designed intentionally or unintentionally to cup, grasp or hold the ball other than the flat face curved end are prohibited. Chest protectors that are specifically manufactured for field hockey goalkeepers to be worn under the shirt are mandatory. Protectors that provide additional coverage (examples would include the abdomen, sides and shoulders) may also be worn. Opponents on defense must position themselves 7 yards away from the attack during side-ins across the sidelines, free hits and endlines.
- 2007 New: All casts, splints and braces must be padded with at least ½" of all closed-cell, slow-recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties. No protective equipment shall have exposed metal or any other material. Each state association may authorize the use of prostheses which in its opinion are no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human body part(s) and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage.
- New: All goalkeepers shall wear tooth protectors, which may be attached to the facemask/helmet. A tooth protector shall be of any readily visible color, other than white or clear. A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral) which shall include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) and a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion and covers the posterior teeth with adequate thickness. It is recommended the protector be properly fitted: 1) Constructed from a model made from an impression of the individual's teeth or 2) Constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing the teeth into the tooth and mouth protector itself.
- 2008 Effective January 1, 2009, the player's stick shall not exceed a bow of 25mm, which must be visible and permanently labeled on the stick. The player's stick shall weigh no more than 23 ounces and must pass through a 2-inch (5.1cm) ring. Goalkeepers, "(New rule) ...d. May use their stick, protective equipment or any part of their body to push the ball away, deflect the ball (in any direction including over the end line) or to stop the ball. This permits a goalkeeper to use their hands, arms, or any other part of their body to move the ball away, but only as part of a goal- saving action;" In addition, goalkeepers' "(New rule) ...o. Goalkeeper striking and/or kicking in an intimidating manner, playing the ball without the stick in her hand, or placing the ball after a hand stop of an aerial ball."
- 2009 No safety rule changes.
- 2010 Clarified the use of hard and unyielding items. Clarified how required equipment should be properly worn. Clarified the guideline for concussion management. Clarified the definition and technique of the self-pass. The following Points of Emphasis were drafted: Concussion Recognition and Management; and Self-pass.

## Football

- 1982 Pants required and knee pads over knees.
- Jersey must fully cover shoulder pads.

## Football

Slippery or sticky substances are illegal on equipment or exposed part of body.

Tear-away jerseys are illegal.

Head coach must verify prior to the game that players are legally equipped.

1983 Yardage chain and down indicator rods must have flat ends and protective cap.

1983 Spearing penalty same as other illegal helmet contact fouls.

Following fair catch interference, receiver can keep the ball plus the penalty from the spot of the foul.

1984 Hip pad must have tailbone protector.

Limited height of raised platform used to anchor cleats.

Restricted clipping to offensive linemen in the free-blocking zone.

Added first down to roughing passer penalty.

1985 Adopted specification for the face protector.

1985 Prohibit player in motion from blocking below the waist in the free blocking zone.

Prohibit any player from positioning himself on the back or shoulders of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.

1986 Team must begin game with 11 players.

Helmet must have a visible exterior warning label regarding the risk of injury.

Allows use of a restraining line around the entire field.

New thigh guard specifications adopted.

1987 Tooth protectors must cover all upper teeth.

If worn, knee braces may not be worn over the pants.

No try if last play touchdown decides outcome of the game.

A foul if injured player does not stay out one play.

Three attendants allowed on field during a time-out.

1988 Any hard portion of knee brace which extends below the pants must be covered.

Use of ceramics for cleats is prohibited.

Deaf teams may use drum to establish cadence.

Open hand extend arm blocking is legal.

## Football

- 1989 Goal posts must be padded by 1990.
- Face protector must have met NOCSAE standard in 1992.
- Jersey may not be taped, tied to, altered to produce a knot.
- State associations can adopt a point differential to terminate a game at halftime or thereafter.
- 1990 Support wrap may be used on forearm and hand.
- If B fouls during a successful kick try, the penalty may be enforced from the succeeding spot.
- 1990 Placekick holder on free kick is given protection.
- 1991 An unconscious or apparently unconscious player may not return to the game without written authorization from a physician.
- 1992 NOCSAE mark required on face mask.
- Rib and back protectors must be fully covered by a jersey.
- 1993 Player who is bleeding, has an open wound or excessive blood on uniform must leave game for at least one down to receive appropriate treatment.
- 1994 Allows hard material on forearm, hand, wrist cast/splint if padded to specifications and authorized by licensed medical doctor.
- A substitute who enters the field during a fight is disqualified.
- Officials' time-out authorized when heat/humidity create a health risk.
- 1995 Fighting defined, penalty is disqualification.
- Second unsportsmanlike foul results in disqualification.
- Jewelry is illegal equipment.
- 1996 Require all hard surface shoulder pad attachments to be fully covered by a jersey.  
A defensive player shall not charge directly into the snapper
- 1997 Prohibits use of eye shields which prevent visual examination of an injured player's eyes.
- Unsportsmanlike foul if player or non-player uses tobacco or smokeless tobacco
- The ball becomes dead immediately if the helmet comes completely off the player in possession of the ball.
- Automatic first down for roughing the snapper.
- State associations may authorize, through a licensed physician, use of a device to enhance efficiency of a required hearing aid.

## Football

- 1998 Prohibit the use of eye shields with less than 100% allowable light transmission.
- 1999 No defensive player may use the hand(s) to slap a blocker's head.  
Clarified that if an eye shield is used, it must be clear.
- 2000 Made face-mask foul either 5 or 15 yard penalty
- 2001 Made contact with the kicker/holder either a 5 or 15 yard penalty
- 2001 Restricted blocking in the free blocking zone  
Officials will discuss sportsmanship expectations with coaches/captains
- 2002 Redefined clipping and added a definition and penalty for a block in the back
- 2003 No changes
- 2004 No changes
- 2005 Beginning in 2006 helmets shall be secured by 4 snaps and mouth guards shall be a color, not clear or white
- 2006 Removed the word "intentional" from the spearing definition
- 2007 A 4-inch wide broken restraining line, 2 yards from the sidelines and end lines around the outside of the football field is now required  
A definition for a flagrant foul was with an emphasis on safety and sportsmanship was added  
Three revisions dealing with illegal helmet contact were made to the existing rules and definitions by bringing them under one heading  
The free-blocking zone for nine-, eight- and six-player football was reduced to a zone three yards either side of the spot of the snap and three yards behind each line of scrimmage  
Two Points of Emphasis were addressed by the NFHS Football Rules Committee for the 2007 football season that addressed risk minimization - Blocking by the Offense and Defense, and Heat and Hydration.  
The NFHS worked with the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) in mailing out a DVD entitled "Heads Up – Reducing the Risk of Head and Neck Injuries in Football" to an estimated 16,000 high schools across the country.

## **Football**

- 2008 Hip pads, tailbone protector, knee pads and thigh guards must not be altered from the manufacturer's original design/production. Shinguards, if worn, must meet NOCSAE specifications.
- A hand pad is now defined as a covering for the hand which may have separate openings for each finger and thumb, is absent of any web-like material between the fingers and/or thumb, and not covering each finger and thumb.
- The rules language for blood and a bleeding player was clarified.
- Four of the five Points of Emphasis that were addressed by the NFHS Football Rules Committee for the 2008 football season addressed risk minimization. MRSA and Communicable Skin Conditions; Purpose of a Football Helmet; Altering Legal Football Equipment; and Sideline Management and Control.
- 2009 The mandatory three-minute warm-up period begins immediately following the conclusion of the halftime intermission. The head coach of each team is responsible for his team being on the field for the warm-up period.
- It is now illegal to grasp the opponent's chin strap.
- 2009 The horse-collar tackle has been added to the list of illegal personal contact fouls, regardless of where it occurs on the field. It is illegal to grasp the inside back or side opening of the collar of the jersey or shoulder pads of the runner and subsequently pull the runner to the ground.
- A restricted area has been defined where a maximum of three coaches may communicate with players and substitutes during dead-ball situations. The coaches must move into the team box before the ball becomes live. There will no longer be an allowance for three coaches to remain in an area adjacent to the sideline during play.
- Four of the six Points of Emphasis that were addressed by the NFHS Football Rules Committee for the 2009 football season were: NFHS Guidelines on Handling Contests During Lightning Disturbances, Illegal Personal Contact, Blocking and Illegal Blocks, and Helmet and Face Mask.
- 2010 Concussion rule revised.
- New football glove/hand pad standard implemented for the 2012 season.
- Horse-collar clarified.
- Penalty defined for unintentional contact between a nonplayer and an official in the restricted area.
- Three of the six Points of Emphasis that were addressed by the NFHS Football Rules Committee for the 2010 football season were: Concussion Recognition and Management; Heat Illness and Hydration; and Illegal Helmet Contact.

## **Girls**

### **Gymnastics**

- 1982 No changes
- 1983 No changes

**Girls**  
**Gymnastics**

- 1984 No changes
- 1985 Roundoff entry vaults illegal.
- 1986 Base mat ( $1\frac{1}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{4}''$ ) and landing mat ( $3\frac{3}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{2}''$ ) for working area of the bars and landing area of vaulting required.
- One-arm vaults illegal.
- Minimum  $3\frac{3}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{2}''$  of matting for landing area of bars and beam required.
- 1986 Coach/spotter permitted between bars or by the beam.
- Giving a gymnast a ten second warning after a fall from the bars before she must remount (total time is 30 seconds). This keeps the gymnast from remounting too quickly.
- Warning on beam was extended to ten seconds before a gymnast's routine is deducted for overtime. Gives the gymnast more time to dismount safely.
- 1987 Salto skills not performed to a feet-first landing do not receive difficulty credit. Discourage gymnast from performing salto skills before they are ready.
- Landing mat on vaulting must be secured to prevent slipping.
- Working area and landing area on bars and beam and landing area of vault must be padded with a minimum of one base mat ( $1\frac{1}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{4}''$ ) and one landing mat ( $3\frac{3}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{2}''$ ) or a single 5, 8 or 10" landing mat.
- If vaulting board is used for mount on bars or beam, it must be moved as soon as the mount is completed.
- 1988 Salto skills not performed to a feet-first landing are void.
- Beginning with 1991-92 season, entire area under beam must be padded with matting at least 6' wide and  $4\frac{1}{2}''$  thick.
- On floor when mat is new, it shall be at least 1" thick. Specify competitive area as being padded.
- 1989 Landing area on vaulting shall be a minimum of 18' x 6' and shall be padded with a minimum of one base mat (at least  $18' \times 1\frac{1}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{4}''$ ) and one landing mat ( $3\frac{3}{4}'' \pm \frac{1}{2}''$ ).
- First vault voided for execution errors may not be repeated as the second vault.
- Beginning with 1992-93, minimum width between uneven rails shall be 47.2" (120 cm).
- 1991 Entire area under the beam must be padded with at least one base mat ( $1\frac{1}{4}'' \pm 1\frac{1}{4}''$ ) and one landing mat ( $3\frac{3}{4}'' \pm 3\frac{3}{4}''$ ).
- 1992 Bars may be set to the gymnast's preference provided the low rail is not lower than 48" and the high rail is not lower than 88".
- Rails shall be capable of spreading to at least 47.2" (1200mm).



**Girls**  
**Gymnastics**

- 1993 A gymnast who is bleeding, has an open wound or an excessive amount of blood on her uniform may complete her current event performance, but must receive proper treatment before returning to competition.
- A gymnast may mount bars or beam from a vaulting board provided the board is placed on the matting required for the working area and is removed after the mount is completed.
- 1993 An area at least 12' long and 6' wide at each end of the beam not used for the dismount shall be matted. Beginning with the 1994-95 season, the matting shall include at least one base mat and one landing mat.
- 1994 An area at least 12' long and 6' wide at each end of the beam shall be matted with at least one base mat and one landing mat.
- 1995 When new mats are purchased, they must be 8 feet wide.
- Specifically recommends that adequate space between event equipment be provided.
- A spotting block may be used on the uneven events during high superior release, flight skills (excluding the mount and dismount).
- 1996 Permits the use of one 8 inch manufactured skill cushion on top of minimum matting requirements, the use of one 4 inch manufactured skill cushion on top of maximum matting or the use of a "sting" on any legal matting.
- 1997 Recommends that beam uprights be padded if such padding is available from the manufacturer.
- 1998 A specifically manufactured mat may be used around the front end of the board for the vaulting event.
- 1999 Participants shall not wear glitter during competition
- A single sting mat (1 ½ inches thick, ± ½ inch) may be placed on the floor exercise mat provided the person placing and removing the mat does not enter the competitive area during a gymnast's performance.
- 2001 The ceiling should be a minimum of 19 feet high and shall be free of obstructions hanging directly over the competitive area of any event. A single manufactured 4-inch skill cushion may be placed in one location on the floor exercise mat for the landing of a superior, high superior or bonus high superior tumbling skill.
- 2002 By state association adoption, a vaulting table may be used in addition to the vaulting horse.
- The host school shall mark the maximum dual-lock setting in red on the bars.
- Spotter may be used on floor provided they stay on the outside of the mat.
- 2003 No changes
- 2004 The top mat, including a sting mat, shall not be wider than any mat underneath it. When the landing area for vault, bars and beam is over a pit, the surface must provide for a solid landing and meet all other rules specifications. On bars and beam, there also must be a solid base for mounts.
- 2005 No changes

**Girls**  
**Gymnastics**

- 2006 Board safety mat around the front and sides of the board is required for all roundoff entry vaults should be used for round off entry mounts on beam.
- 2006 The use of cell phones and other electronic devices is prohibited in the competitive area during competition.
- Maximum matting thickness was increased to 16 inches.
- A sting mat may be placed on the runway (not the board) provided it is no more than 2 inches thick.
- Side horse is no longer a legal piece of equipment
- There is no deduction for a coach may stand between the board and the vault table.
- A spotter is required for all round off entry vaults
- A spotter may facilitate a handspring vault during preflight or after flight. The deduction is 1.0.
- 2007 A round- off entry vault is void if it has both a salto and a twist in the after flight.
- A manufactured hand placement mat may be used in vaulting for assistance in hand placement and extra cushioning. The mat may be 36 inches x 36 inches x 1 3/8 inches or 36 inches x 54 inches x 1 3/8 inches. A manufactured sting mat shall not be permitted to be placed on the runway for vaulting.
- The pistons/pedestal (vertical uprights) of the vaulting table shall be padded with the manufacturer's protection padding.
- The vault is void if a gymnast performs a vault without the pistons/pedestal of the vaulting table being padded.
- 2008 Increased the thickness of legal matting upon which the vaulting board may be placed when executing a mount on beam or bars and increased thickness for mounting without the aid of the board.
- Deleted skills no longer appropriate for high school girls gymnastics due to advancement of gymnasts' skills and change in equipment.
- Added to medium skills on bars to increase choices for gymnasts at an average level to meet eight-skill requirement in routine. Also added to medium skills on floor exercise.
- Revised Jump/Leap Chart to reflect a more natural progression of skills for the gymnast.
- Emphasized proper precautions to prevent the spread of communicable disease and skin infection procedures.
- POE included symptoms and care of concussions.

## Girls

### Gymnastics

- 2010-12 Increased the fall time to 45 seconds on uneven bars and 30 seconds on the balance beam.
- Stipulates competitive equipment shall meet rule specifications and such specifications shall not be waived by prior mutual consent of participating schools.
- Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- Updated and clarified the rules regarding braces, casts, padding and prostheses.
- Specifies that the landing area on vault shall be a minimum of 18 feet by 8 feet and meet all other matting requirements beginning July 1, 2012.
- Specifies that plywood is not permitted under the board for mounting purposes on bars and beam.
- Specifies that the landing area on balance beam shall be a minimum of 12 feet by 8 feet beginning July 1, 2012.

### Ice Hockey

- 1982 Recommends the use of throat guards by goalkeeper for 1982-83 and requires their use for 1983-84.
- 1982 Requires that a player whose helmet is dislodged must skate immediately to his team's bench where he can be replaced by a substitute.
- 1982 Adds checking from behind as a penalty call and clearly delineates a fair-body check.
- 1983 Recommends that equipment for all players, including goalkeeper, shall include face masks which have met the HECC/ASTM F513-81 Eye and Face Equipment for Hockey Players Standard (required for 1985-86). Requires goalkeepers to wear throat guards.
- Stipulates that stick blades not be more than three inches or less than two inches wide at any point. This prevents players from sharpening ends of blades, thus preventing face mask penetration.
- 1984 Requires all players to wear helmets while in the players' box.
- Prevents attacking players from crossing the outer edge of the face-off circles to join a gathering of players after a stoppage of play (prevents fighting).
- Protects goalkeepers from slashing, jabbing or poking at the puck after goalkeeper has the puck covered and/or in possession.
- Outlaws custom-made, contoured, fiberglass face masks for 1984-85.
- 1985 Requires all players, including goalkeepers, to wear face masks which meet the HECC/ASTM F513-81 Eye and Face Equipment for Hockey Players Standards.
- Prohibits the wearing of exposed jewelry.
- Requires that any injured player for whom play has been stopped must leave the ice and cannot return until play resumes.

## Ice Hockey

- 1986 Requires that all players, including goalkeepers, wear an internal/external mouth protector which should cover all the remaining teeth or one jaw.
- Prohibits the wearing of casts, braces and splints on the arms or hands made of hard and/or unyielding material, even if padded.
- 1987 Allow players to wear knee braces.
- Allow goalkeepers to keep a water bottle at the goal cage to prevent dehydration.
- Prevent players from participating in play if they possess more than one stick.
- Assign either a minor or major penalty to players who make physical contact with an opponent after the whistle has blown.
- Assign either a minor or major penalty to players who foul a goalkeeper in his crease or who has the puck covered.
- 1988 Recommends that goal frames do not have a metal deflector plate at the rear base or the goal frame (required for 1989-90).
- 1989 Require that goal frames have no metal deflector plate along the base of the goal frame back.
- 1989 Recommend that all players wear throat protectors.
- 1989 Add the helmets (as well as face masks) must not be altered from original manufacturer's specifications.
- Require that officials wear protective helmets.
- 1990 No specific changes for safety.
- 1991 Requires all players to attach mouthguards to face mask. Mouthguard must be made of nontransparent material.
- 1992 Prohibit an unconscious player from returning to the ice without written authorization from a physician.
- Stipulate that dental guards must be made of colored, nonclear material.
- Recommend that players wear HECC/ASTM approved helmets (required for 1995-96).
- Require that a coach from each team be present for pregame warm-ups.
- 1993 Bleeding player rule adopted for all NF sports.
- 1994 No specific changes for safety.
- 1995 Requires separate, attached throat guards for goalkeepers.
- Require earplugs be worn with all helmets.
- Require HECC approved helmets for all players.

## Ice Hockey

- Prohibit body-checking for girl's teams.
- 1996 Required whistle when helmet or face mask becomes dislodged.
- Penalty for rough board play.
- Penalty for body check when not controlling puck.
- 1997 No body checking from behind.
- No head spear or head butt.
- 1998 No change in "safety" rules
- 1999 No change in "safety" rules
- 2000 The use of tobacco products is a game misconduct penalty.
- No player shall butt-end or attempt to butt-end an opponent.
- If a player leaves a bench during an altercation the penalty shall be game disqualification.
- No player shall spear or attempt to spear an opponent.
- 2001 Require all students occupying exposed bench area to wear helmet with facemask meeting HECC/ASTM standards
- Required equipment for goal keepers includes helmet with strap. The headgear should be fastened in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
- Interference with an opponent not in possession of the puck is not permitted anywhere under any circumstances.
- 2002 A penalty shall be assessed to any player who intentionally or recklessly contacts a player in the head, including with the stick or by an illegal body check.
- 2003 The end of a hollow stick must be fully covered.
- No coach, manager or other team personnel, including players, shall intentionally touch, trip, hold, push or in any other way physically abuse or attempt to physically abuse, an official, before, during or after the game.
- 2004 Changed rules to read, "Subsequent player(s) shall not enter into a fight" and "Players not involved in a fight, shall, upon verbal signal from the referee, skate immediately to their respective team bench area, excluding goalkeepers."
- 2005 Added "padded hockey pants/hockey pants" to listing of protective equipment for which each player is responsible for wearing for all games.
- 2006 Added "Obstruction" defined as use of stick or body to interfere with an opponent away from play of the puck. Shall be penalized under this rule.

## Ice Hockey

- 2007 Added “acceptable throat/neck protection” verbiage.  
Deleted verbiage that stated “It is required that dental guards be attached to the face mask.”
- 2008 Reworded: “acceptable throat/neck protection” verbiage.
- 2009 Added: All players are required to wear helmets with face masks while in the players’ or penalty bench.
- 2010 Instituted concussion language that is consistent with all NFHS rules books and was approved by the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.  
Clarified mouth guard language. All players require a mouth guard.  
Through the NFHS SMAC language was written for hard and unyielding items such as casts and extra padding.  
“Recommend” that officials wear a face shield.  
An official may call a penalty for “contact to the head”.

## Soccer

- 1982 Requires that an injured player be replaced if time is stopped for the injury.
- 1983 Requires that an injured player be replaced if time is stopped for the injury if he or she is attended to on the field.  
Clarifies cleat requirements. Official determines if cleats have developed a cutting edge.
- 1984 New restrictions on goalkeeper will reduce contact with opponents.
- 1985 Goalkeeper possession defined.  
Goalkeepers allowed to wear a head protector of closed-cell, slow-recovering material that stays soft in its final form.
- 1986 Clarified and standardized the definition of a soccer shoe.  
All hard casts are illegal even if padded.
- 1986 Goalkeeper allowed to wear a soft-billed baseball type hat or visor to shield eyes from the sun.
- 1987 Adds hard “splints” to hard casts even if padded, etc.
- 1988 Shinguards will be mandatory beginning in the fall of 1990.  
Ankle braces allowed if covered at least by a stocking.
- 1989 Shinguards must be worn under the stockings.
- 1990 Shinguards must be worn under the stockings and be commercially manufactured for that purpose.

## Soccer

Hearing aids and mouth protectors now legal.

1991 Coach is required to certify to the referee prior to the game that all players' equipment meets the rules requirements.

1992 Requires noncaustic field marking material be used to mark lines.

Unconscious or apparently unconscious player cannot re-enter without physician's written permission.

1993 Bleeding player rule adopted for all NF sports.

1994 A player leaving the team area to enter the field where a fight is taking place is disqualified.

1995 If portable goals are used, they shall be securely anchored.

Allow casts and braces if properly padded and authorized by a physician to protect an existing injury.

1996 Responsibilities for determining playable conditions prior to and during games defined.

1997 No changes affecting safety

1998 No changes affecting safety

1999 No changes affecting safety

2000 Players may not alter shin guards, wear them where protection is not provided to the shin, or wear shin guards that are not the appropriate size.

2001 All participants in a game must wear shoes. Shoes with soles containing metal (aluminum, magnesium, titanium, etc.) leather, rubber nylon or plastic cleats, studs or bars, whether molded as part of the sole or detachable, are allowed as long as the referee does not consider them dangerous. Shoes shall not be altered in any way that makes them unsafe.

Types of equipment, which are illegal: knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless hinges are covered on all sides, and all of its edges are overlapped. Any covering (sleeve) recommended by the manufacturer may be worn.

Equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn.

Jewelry shall not be worn except for **religious** or medical medals, which shall be taped to the body with the medical data visible.

If portable goals are used, they shall be adequately anchored, secured or **counterweighted** to the ground.

2002 The required player equipment includes a jersey, shorts, stockings, suitable shoes and shinguards which shall provide adequate and reasonable protection, be professionally manufactured, age-appropriate, not altered to decrease protection, and worn under the stockings.

2003 Shinguards must be worn with the bottom edge no higher than 2 inches above the ankle.

## Soccer

2004 Add the following to the existing rule: **The vertical portion of the goal post may be padded with commercially manufactured material for soccer goals.** This material shall be white, have a maximum thickness of one inch, be a minimum of 72 inches high and shall be properly secured.

Change "When an injured player(s) from either team is attended to on the field" with "When a player(s) from either team is injured:" and "The injured player(s) shall leave the field and may be replaced."

Player equipment shall include shinguards that are age- **and size-** appropriate.

2005 Under illegal equipment, change knee braces made of hard unyielding material, to **knee braces with exposed metal.**

A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of a hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release for the injured player signed by a physician (MD/DO) shall be available at the game site.

2006 Beginning with the 2007 fall season, shinguards must meet the NOCSAE specifications

2007 Beginning with the 2008 fall season, shinguards must meet the NOCSAE specifications.

Head coaches will be cautioned if players are not properly equipped for play once the player enters the field of play.

2008 The field of play shall be rectangular, 100 to 120 yards long and 55 to 80 yards wide. The following minimal dimensions are recommended:

- a. High Schools -110 yards by 65 yards;
- b. Junior High Schools - 100 yards by 55 yards.

Inquire of each head coach whether each of his/her players is properly and legally equipped. Any questions regarding legality of a player's equipment shall be determined by the head referee, or the center referee in a game officiated using the double-dual system of officiating.

Improperly equipped player(s) shall be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play. Play shall not be stopped for an infringement of this rule except that the referee may stop play immediately where there is a dangerous situation.

The head coach shall receive the first caution issued (yellow card) for an illegally equipped player. All subsequent cautions (yellow cards) for illegally equipped player(s) shall be issued directly to the player(s) and not to the head coach.

Points of Emphasis - Shinguards, Team Areas, Knee Braces, Game Management, Pregame Responsibilities



## **Soccer**

- 2009 Beginning with the 2012 fall season, the NOCSAE seal and height range shall be permanently marked on the front of the shinguard.
- Illegal equipment shall not be worn by any player. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the referee, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment that are illegal include, but are not limited to, the following:  
(g) ankle braces made of metal or unyielding materials, unless covered by a stocking or other suitable material. Ankle braces not made of metal or unyielding material may be worn outside a stocking.
- Points of Emphasis – Unconscious Player, Ankle Braces, Shinguard Placement, Team Areas
- 2010 Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (Please see NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion).
- Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder unless covered, and must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick.
- Artificial limbs, which in the judgment of the state high school association are no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human limb and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage, may be permitted. Upper limb prostheses and above-knee leg prostheses are discouraged. Hinges shall be lateral and covered by suitable material. All permissible artificial limbs must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick.
- Points of Emphasis – Concussion Management, Ankle and Knee Braces, Team Areas
- Spirit**
- 1999 Participants wearing casts shall not be involved in stunts except a forward roll.
- The appropriate length of fingernails for all members of a stunting squad means the nails are visible beyond the end of the fingers when viewed from the palm side of the hand held in a vertical position.
- 2000 Dismounts to the performing surface from a prop higher than 3 feet shall have an assisted landing.
- No skill without constant hand-to-hand contact shall be performed prior to landing on the performance surface.
- 2001 Clarify that an illegal position is any inverted position including the chorus line flip, if the head falls below the waist of the participant.
- Stunts shall not be performed during a basketball or volleyball game when the ball is in play including free throws and player warm-up.
- A coach shall not permit a team member to participate if in the judgment of the coach, the participant accessories including hair and nails, do not meet the NFHS rule or the spirit of the rule.
- Add editorial that puts provisions of the book in effect for all spirit squad activities including practice, games, performances and competitions.

## **Spirit**

- 2002 A spotter is required for stunts in which the supporting arm(s) of the base(s) is fully extended above the head except for the double base vertical T-lift.
- A swinging stunt in a downward direction is not permitted.
- Tumbling over/under an individual or a prop is not permitted.
- 2002 A twist that occurs during a toss shall not involve more than two complete rotations.
- A twist performed on the performing surface (jump-twist-land) shall not involve more than two complete rotations.
- 2003 Stunts shall not be performed during a basketball or volleyball game when the ball is in play, including free throws. Spirit participants must not stunt on the court or sideline area during player warm-up if an alternate area is available.
- Cheerleaders must not stand behind the free throw lane extended.
- Backward dismounts to a cradle must have at least 3 catchers.
- Forward face down dismounts are illegal.
- A half pendulum must have a separate spotter on the opposite side of the base(s) from the catchers if the top person returns to a vertical position
- In transitional stunts, physical contact must be maintained between the top person and the base(s).
- 2004 A forward roll is illegal from an airborne position, i.e., jump or dive
- A twist performed to a cradle must not involve more than two complete rotations except, when dismounting to a cradle from a side facing stunt, 2 ¼ rotations are permitted.
- In transitional stunts, physical contact must be maintained between the top person and the base(s).
- 2004 In transitional stunts involving a braced flyer, physical contact must be maintained between the flyer and the bases, except when:
- The torso of the flyer remains upright (vertical)
  - The flyer has at least two bases and a spotter/catcher
  - There is a spotter for each bracer; and
  - The loss of contact with the bases does not significantly exceed the height of either stunt in the transition.
- When the transitional stunt involves changing bases, the new base(s) must be to the side or in front of the person moving the stunt except when the top person remains upright (vertical) throughout the transition to the new base(s) with the person moving the stunt making no more than a half turn to face the new base(s).
- A twist performed to a cradle must not involve more than two complete rotations except, when dismounting to a cradle from a side facing stunt, 2 ¼ rotations are permitted.

**Spirit**

2005

The flyer does not become inverted.

The loss of contact is a continuous up and down movement that is not supported by the bracer(s) and does not pause at the top.

2006

Basket tosses and other similar multi-base tosses are permitted only on appropriate mats, grass, rubberized and soft yielding surfaces.

A helicopter is legal provided all the following conditions are met:

- a. The rotation in the horizontal plane is not greater than 180 degrees.
- b. The flyer does not twist.
- c. The flyer is in a face up position.
- d. There are at least 4 bases who serve as both tossers and catchers.
- e. At least one tosser/catcher must be in position to support the head, neck and shoulder area.

2-1-4 When discarding props (signs, etc.) that are made of solid material, or have corners or sharp edges, team members must gently toss or place the props.

Rationale: This rule reduces the risk of injury to a team member, spectator, or official.

2-1-7 The use of mini-tramps, spring boards, spring-assisted floors or any height-increasing apparatus is illegal for use during performances and competitions.

Rationale: These devices are by definition "height-increasing apparatuses" and should not be used for anything other than a teaching tool. High school safety rules are written with the understanding that the primary performance surface will be a gym floor, outdoor grass or track, or matted floor.

2-5-2 Bases of extended stunts must have both feet in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface.

Rationale: Adding this restriction will help ensure the stability of extended stunts.

2-8-3 Exceptions 1 and 2

In braced partner stunts/pyramids, at least one bracer of each pair must be at shoulder height or below.

Exception 1: The following extended stunts may brace any other extended stunt:

- a. Chair
- b. Multi-base dead-man lift
- c. Multi-base straddle lift

Exception 2: Extensions may brace the stunts listed above and other extensions (except a totem pole.)

Rationale: Exception 1: As the variety of partner stunts and transitions increases, the role of the bracer must keep pace. Allowing these relatively stable extended stunts to brace an expanded number of extended stunts does not present unreasonable risk to participants. Exception 2: Extensions have a high center of gravity than the stunts listed in Exception 1 and should not brace extended stunts that are less stable.

2-9-1c (new)

A forward suspended roll is legal provided all the following conditions are met:

- a. It begins from a stunt shoulder height or below.
- b. In multi-base stunts, the flyer maintains continuous hand-to-hand/arm contact with two bases or two posts.
- c. In single-base stunts, the flyer maintains continuous hand-to-hand/arm contact with two posts.
- d. The bases control the flyer's dismount to the performing surface or cradle.

Rationale: In ©, allowing a single base to also assist the flyer's dismount can cause a twisting rotation and an unsteady landing on the performing surface.

2-10-1 e (new)

In all tosses:

- a. The flyer must be directed vertically and caught by the original bases.
- b. Participants must not pass over or under other participants
- c. The catchers and spotter must remain in their original positions unless making adjustments for safety purposes.
- d. The flyer must not become inverted (head below waist)
- e. The flyer must not hold objects in her/his hands (e.g. poms, signs, etc.) Exception: Load-in tosses. (also called "tosses into partner stunts" or toss to hands, etc.)

Rationale: In (e), holding objects during a toss presents considerable risk to all participants, especially if safety adjustments become necessary. The exception for load-in tosses was added because the loss of contact in that type of toss is not high enough to present unreasonable risk to participants.

- 2-1-14** A participant who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or uniform is changed before returning to participation.  
**RATIONALE:** This rule is consistent with all other NFHS sports and is for the safety of all athletes.
- 2-6-11** In dismounts where a bracer is involved after the release of the flyer, all the following conditions must be met:
- The flyer does not become inverted.
  - The flyer has at least two bases.
  - Each flyer and bracer has a separate spotter.
  - The loss of contact is a continuous up and down movement.
  - The flyer's center of gravity remains directly over the bases.
  - The flyer's weight is not supported by the bracer(s).
  - The bracers do not intentionally increase the height of the flyer.
- RATIONALE:** This rule was written so that the wording would be similar to the transition exception in rule 2-12-1.
- 2-8-2 b.** A flyer must not be in an inverted position except for the following:
- During a forward suspended roll;
  - When beginning a stunt from an inverted position on the performing surface, that goes directly to a non-inverted position shoulder height or below. This stunt must include a base or spotter who protects the head/neck/shoulder area of the flyer. This base or spotter must maintain contact with the flyer from the inverted position until the flyer is no longer inverted.
- RATIONALE:** Requiring a base or spotter to maintain physical contact with a flyer while she/he is inverted stabilizes the stunt and reduces risk of injury to the flyer.  
A forward suspended roll is legal provided all the following conditions are met:
- 2-9-1 a. and d.**
- The flyer begins from the performing surface or from a stunt shoulder height or below.
  - In suspended rolls from the performing surface, the flyer maintains continuous hand-to-hand contact with two bases.
- RATIONALE:** Allowing a forward suspended roll from the performance surface does not present more risk (and possibly less) than forward suspended rolls from stunts, provided two bases are used.
- 2-12-1a. and i.** **Article 1** - In transitional stunts, physical contact must be maintained between the flyer and the base(s) except when ALL of the following conditions are met:
- The flyer maintains hand-to-hand/arm contact with at least one bracer during the entire loss of contact with his/her base(s).
  - The flyer does not become inverted.
  - The flyer has at least two bases EXCEPT THAT a single-base tick tock is permitted when the flyer remains upright (vertical) throughout the stunt.
  - Each flyer and bracer has a separate spotter.
  - The loss of contact is a continuous up-and-down movement.
  - The flyer's center of gravity remains directly over the bases.
  - The flyer's weight is not supported by the bracer(s).
  - The flyer is not released to a toss.
  - The bracers do not intentionally increase the height of the flyer.
- 3-1-6** Pedini-style dance shoes and others with heels of sufficient height to raise the bottom of the foot off the floor.  
**Add Exception** **RATIONALE:** The purpose of requiring that the bottom of the foot be covered is to prevent injury and disease. The pedini-style shoe's heel raises the bottom of the foot off the floor which minimizes that risk.
- 2009 A twist to a cradle involving more than one rotation is permitted only on appropriate mats, grass, rubberized and soft-yielding surfaces. COMMENT: This change reflects the skill level in high school cheerleading and is consistent with the NFHS focus on risk minimization. NOTE: Non-twisting or single-twist cradles are permitted on any appropriate surface.

## **Spirit**

- 2009 Toe/leg pitches to a jump or tumbling skill are illegal.  
COMMENT: This clarifies the intent of last year's rule change permitting a forward suspended roll from the performing surface.
- 2010 Points of Emphasis:
- Concussions are a common result of sports-related head injuries and carry the potential for serious complications if not managed correctly. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee has developed suggested guidelines for management of concussions which state that no athlete suspected of having a concussion should return to the same practice or contest even when symptoms have cleared within 15 minutes. That said, athletes should have medical clearance from an appropriate health official before returning to the activity. Spirit coaches should refer to the current NFHS Concussion Brochure available at the NFHS Web site ([www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)) under Sports Medicine Resources.
- Double Downs/Twists – It has been stressed to spirit coaches that they are responsible for teaching and enforcing general risk management rules, identifying teams' ability levels, and following proper progressions in learning new skills. It is the NFHS's responsibility to revise the rules to minimize risk whenever trends indicate a continuation of poor execution of skills resulting in injuries. For this reason, the NFHS is calling attention to the fact that double downs/twists will no longer be allowed at the high school level after this year if coaches continue to allow athletes to perform this skill with improper technique. In order to retain double downs/twists in the future, it is imperative that coaches insist upon "perfection before progression" when allowing teams to stunt.

## **Swimming & Diving**

- 1981 Starting platforms required for all meets.
- 1982 No changes.
- 1983 Allow a racing start.
- 1984 No changes.
- 1985 Deleted option of three-meter diving.
- 1986 Noted that pools remodeled or built after January 1987, must have a 12-foot water depth measured two feet in front of the one-meter diving board.
- If there is not written prior-mutual consent, events cannot be conducted where water depth, water conditions, starting platforms and backstroke flags do not meet rules specifications.
- Newly constructed pools shall place inlets on the end walls at least 2' 6" below the surface of the water.
- 1987 There should be at least 100 foot candles of lighting at the water level of all competitive pools.
- Permits a diver to correct an error in listing the position of a dive up to the time he or she actually performs the dive. This prevents a diver from attempting a dive he or she is not prepared to perform.
- Beginning with the 1991-92 season in pools with water depth less than 3' 6" at the starting end, the starting platforms shall not be more than 18" above the water surface, or they shall be located at the deep end of the pool.

## Swimming & Diving

- 1988 Changed water depth to 4 feet in the 1988 revision above.
- 1990 Recall rope required in all meets.
- Coaches cannot mutually agree to swim in a pool that does not meet rules specifications for water depth and/or starting platforms.
- Adopted a more severe penalty (unsatisfactory dive) when a diver hits the board while performing a dive.
- Starting end must have a water depth of at least 4' or the starting platforms shall not be more than 18" above the water surface.
- 1991 In pools with less than 3' 6" starting end, swimmers must start in the water.
- 1992 An individual event competitor, who is bleeding, has an open wound or an excessive amount of blood on the uniform may not participate in another race until proper treatment has been administered.
- 1993 When this occurs during a relay event (except the fourth swimmer), the race is stopped. The area and competitor shall be properly treated and the race reswam after an appropriate recover period.
- 1993 Starting platforms shall be securely fastened.
- 1995 Backstroker swimming submerged after the start or a turn must break the surface of the water by the 15-meter mark.
- 1996 No changes
- 1997 Optical starting devices may now be at side OR end of pool
- 1999 No changes
- 2000 No changes
- 2001 Competitor shall not wear jewelry (except religious/medical) and hair restraint devices must me worn in the hair to be considered legal.
- Eliminate the option for an 18-in starting platform in pools with water depth from 3 1/2 to 4 feet.
- Water depth shall be a minimum of 4 feet if starting blocks are used.
- 2002 End walls are finished with a non-slip surface that extends no less those .8 meters (2feet 7 1/2 inches below the water surface.
- Eliminate the practice of standing during the backstroke.
- Every diver should be allowed one or more warm-up dive.
- For the backstroke start, swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end with both hands in contact with the end of the pool or the starting platform.
- 2003 The swimmer shall step into the water feet-first for any in-water start.

## Swimming & Diving

A diver may withdraw from the diving event by giving notice to the referee at a specific time, without being disqualified from other events.

A diver shall be disqualified if he/she fails two dives.

2004 Define a dive as beginning when the diver assumes a starting position and ending when the diver has passed below the surface of the water.

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers.

When starting platforms are used, the minimum water depth for racing starts shall be measured from the end of the pool to a distance at least 16'5" (5 meters) from the end wall.

Proper distance for placement of backstroke flags for 25 yard pools is 5 yards, and for 25 meter pools is 5 meters.

2004 When it is discovered during his/her dive, that a diver is wearing illegal attire or jewelry, he/she shall be disqualified from the event.

2005 When it is discovered that any competitor is wearing illegal attire or jewelry, he/she will not be permitted to participate in an event/dive until the illegal attire or jewelry is replaced or removed.

The referee has the authority to stop or suspend competition or suspend/terminate a contest whenever the elements require. Be familiar with the NFHS Lightning Guidelines on Page 7.

2006 POE addressed proper procedures for handling apparent concussions. (Rule interpreters meeting presentation on officials' role in risk minimization)

2007 Added a penalty of disqualification for a competitor in diving who enters the water without the diving referee's permission.

A diver may have his/her arms in the position of his/her choice for a forward dive starting position.

2008 Removed listing a recall rope for use in recalling a race. Although still legal this is not preferred method with the other alternatives available.

2009 Permits the competitor to place his/her feet on the end wall, out of the water at the backstroke start, as long as the feet, including the toes, are not above or curling over the lip of the gutter or pool edge.

Prohibits the use of a pistol capable of discharging live ammunition for use as the sounding device.

2010 Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.

POE addressing concussion management.

POE addressing on-site shaving. Prohibited and responsibility of the coach to discuss with athletes.

POE addressing the wearing of jewelry. Prohibited during competition and warm-ups.



## Track & Field

- 1982 Authorized warm-up jump in high jump or pole vault without bar in place.
- Contemplated restricting the movement of the pole vault standards to 24" from plane of stopboard into landing area.
- 1983 Present rule allows crossbar to be moved 24" in either direction (leading to stall-outs and contributing to landing on runway side of planting box).
- 1984 Limits movement of pole-vault crossbar from the vertical plane of the stopboard to a maximum of 24" in the direction of the landing surface.
- 1985 Announced that beginning in 1987, a front pad, surrounding the pole-vault planting box would be required,
- Authorized the use of a javelin with a rubber tip as an alternative to a steel tip.
- 1986 Requires a common cover over pole-vault landing pads made up of two or more sections.
- 1987 Requires a common cover over high-jump landing pad made up of two or more sections. Calls attention to diagram of discus throwing cage.
- 1988 Prohibited any type of somersaulting technique in the long jump.
- 1989 Recommended where conditions dictate a cage be provided around the discus circle.
- Recommended where conditions dictate control ropes or a barrier, restricting traffic into the landing sectors of the throwing events be used.
- 1989 Restricted the location of the crossbar in the pole vault, from a position 12" beyond the vertical plane of the top of the stopboard, up to a maximum of 24" beyond the vertical plane of the stopboard, in the direction of the landing pad.
- 1990 Announced that beginning in 1993 a discus cage will be required.
- 1991 Points of emphasis stressed safety in the throwing events and the landing areas of the pole vault and high jump.
- 1992 Required the use of a discus cage for the discus event.
- 1993 Recommended that only non-metal circular crossbars be used.
- Mandated that a vaulter's weight shall be at below the manufacturer's pole rating.
- 1994 Required the removal or padding with 2" dense foam of hard or unyielding surfaces such as asphalt, concrete, metal or wood around the immediate area of the pole vault or high jump landing pads.
- 1995 Required coach to verify the vaulter will use a pole rated at or above the vaulter's weight.
- 1996 Prohibit metal crossbars
- Training poles may not be used in warm up or competition.

## Track & Field

Exposed projections on base of pole vault standards must be covered or padded.

1997 No changes made in “safety” rules.

1998 Hard surfaces extending out from beneath the sides and back of the high-jump landing pad shall be padded. Recommend hard surfaces be removed.

Providing liquid during a cross-country run is not considered an aid.

Taping the wrist is permissible.

Clarified hard surface between planting box and landing pad shall be padded.

1999 No changes made in “safety” rules.

2000 No changes. Began discussions to increase the minimum size of the pole vault landing pad.

2001 Required the use of a 40-degree sector, with appropriate cage, when the discus is contested in the infield of the track.

Continued discussions to increase the minimum size of the pole vault landing pad.

2002 The referee is given the authority to determine that an event venue is unacceptable for competition.

No jewelry permitted.

Monitored ASTM’s progress regarding new minimum pole vault landing pad dimensions.

2002 Prior to the start of the meet, the head coach shall be responsible for verifying to the referee/starter that all his/her competitors are properly equipped.

2003 Adopt new dimensions for pole vault landing system. Also recommend standard marking system for runway, and promote the Preferred Landing Zone.

The games committee may designate a specific area for pole vault coaches.

Upon determining that the event venue does not meet the criteria set forth in the rules, the referee can declare that the event will not be contested.

Effective immediately, the overall size of the pole vault landing pad shall be 19’8” wide by 20’2” deep.

A minimum of 2-inch dense foam padding (box collar) shall be used to pad any hard and unyielding surface including between the planting box and all pads.

A mark or marker shall not be placed on the runway, but it is permissible to place markers at the side of the runway.

Distance from the foul line or takeoff board may be adjusted to accommodate different levels of competition.

2004 By state association adoption, the games committee may designate the use of the 40-degree or 34.92-degree sectors in the shot and/or discus throw. It is believed that the tighter sector requires more control during the throw.

## Track & Field

A contestant shall not be entered in more than four events, excluding relays.

Infraction for warming up without a coach or event official at the venue shall lead to a warning, and if repeated, a disqualification from that event. If the incident recurs, the athlete will be disqualified from further competition in the meet as a penalty for unsupervised warm-up in throwing and jumping events.

2005 Prior to competition, the coach must verify that each of that school's pole vaulters meets the requirements. Note: Each state association shall determine its own procedure regarding coach's verification

2006 92-degree throwing sector required for shot put and discus.

Guidelines for possible layout for the discus cage were revised to reflect change to 34.92-degree sector. POE on zero point for the pole vault to enhance proper location of standards and landing pit. POE stressed safety markings for field events to minimize risk. POE addressed proper procedures for handling apparent concussions.

2007 The games committee has the authority to designate areas where coaches may observe and confer with competitors during competition.

Delete the foul for a competitor in the pole vault leaving the ground without breaking the plane and making contact with the landing pad or ground.

2008 A competitor in the shot put and discus may exit the ring to wipe hands, clean shoes etc. before starting his/her attempt but within the allowable time limit for the trial.

Clarified that etchings, serial numbers and other such markings relating to the characteristics of the pole shall not replace the required contrasting mark on the pole indicating the pole rating as determined by the manufacturer.

Implement inspector verifies poles are legal and if a pole has been altered it is not legal for competition.

Clarified that it is not a foul if the vaulter's feet leave the ground when stopping his/her approach and the vaulter's momentum causes the feet to leave the ground and return to the ground.

A bungee cord is not permitted for warm-ups in the pole vault.

POE, proper and consistent enforcement of rules throughout the season and educating volunteer workers of rules of events.

2009 For gun starts, only a closed barreled starter's pistol may be used.

Visible etchings, which appear on poles, shall not replace the requirement of the manufacturer's pole rating appearing on the pole in a contrasting color.

Clarified the original intent to permit a competitor in the pole vault to abort the approach and in stopping plant the pole and momentum causes his/her feet to leave the ground without being considered a foul. It is a foul if a vaulter leaves the ground in an attempt and fails to clear the crossbar.

## **Track & Field**

2010 All areas designated for the coaches to observe and confer with competitors shall be clearly identified and marked by the host meet management prior to the start of event competition.

Effective January 1, 2013, the crossbar shall be circular. Square with beveled edges or triangular crossbars shall no longer be legal for competition following the implementation date.

The National Federation Track and Field Rules Committee places a high priority on risk minimization for pole vault competitors. Meet management is responsible for providing a landing system, standards and runway that meet the rule requirements. Coaches are responsible for their competitors having legal vaulting poles and that the competitor's weight is at or below the manufacturer's pole rating. Officials are required to inspect each pole to verify that the poles used are legal. The committee has reaffirmed the requirements of Rule 7-5-3 that etchings, serial numbers, etc. that may appear on poles shall not replace the requirement of the manufacturer's pole rating in the minimum  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch marking in a contrasting color on each pole either above or within the required 1-inch circular band marking the top handhold position. In order to preserve the integrity of the event and reduce risk of injury of the pole vault competitor, no person involved in the event: meet management, coach or officials, can disregard any requirements of the rules dealing with the landing system, standards, runway, vaulting poles or vaulter. The committee will be diligent in gathering information from experimentation and recognized studies to make certain the pole vault rules afford reasonable risk minimization for competitors. The committee will continue to seek information regarding developing safety equipment.

2011 Places a long-standing informal procedure within the rules for the state association and school to follow when an accommodation/modification of the rules for participation is made due to medical or religious reasons.

Updated and clarified the rules regarding braces, casts, padding and prostheses.

Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.

Changed the pole vault warm-up procedure for a competitor who has passed three consecutive heights and has not yet entered the competition.

POE addressing concussion management, casts, braces, prostheses and blood on uniform.

## **Volleyball**

1982 Clarifies braces and supports are permitted on body parts other than on fingers, hands or forearms. Braces must be padded with at least 2  $\frac{1}{2}$ " foam rubber and supports cannot be hard, unyielding or abrasive. Specifies hair devices may be worn if made of soft material.

1983 Recommends that standards (including cranks) and cables be padded.

Recommends standards (including cranks), cables and referee's stand be padded with at least 1 inch of soft flexible material.

1984 Dangerous contact with floor cables, standards or referee's platform is illegal.

1985 Requires referee's stand and standards be padded to a minimum of 5  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet with at least 1 inch padding. That guy cables be padded to a minimum of 5  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet with at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch padding.

1986 Specify that the ball be whistled dead when the ball or a player enters a nonplayable area.

## Volleyball

Matches cannot be conducted if the standards, referee's platform and guy cables are not properly padded.

- 1987 Any exposed steel cable through bottom of net must be covered.
- 1990 Any exposed steel cable and/or metal tensioning device through bottom of net must be covered.
- 1992 A player who is bleeding, has an open wound or has an excessive amount of blood on the uniform shall be removed from the game for proper treatment.
- 1993 Exposed steel cable and/or metal tensioning device through the top or bottom of the net must be covered.
- 1995 Requires any exposed steel cable and/or metal tensioning devices through the top and bottom of the net to be covered.
- 1999 No changes
- 2001 With the 2002-03 season, all uniforms must be free of hard and unyielding items such as buttons, zippers, snaps and fasteners.
- 2002 Prior to the match, officials shall meet with the head coaches and captains to discuss sportsmanship expectations. At this meeting, coaches shall verify that all their players are wearing legal uniforms and equipment.
- Players shall not wear body paint or glitter on their hair, face, uniform or body.
- 2003 All uniforms must be worn the way the manufacture intended for them to be worn.
- 2004 By state high school association adoption, teams may play a best two-of-three game match in which a team is considered the winner of the match when it wins two games. All games shall be 25 points (no cap). The third game shall not be played unless it is necessary to determine the winner of the match.
- A pre-match conference shall be conducted with the head coach.
- Delete - Officials shall stop play when a player breaks the plane of a non- playable area.
- Players may play a ball over a non-playable area if they have a body part in contact with a playable area at the time the ball is contacted. During the follow through, the player may enter a non-playable area after playing the ball.
- Nets may be suspended from ceiling, not just attached to floor poles.
- An exceptional substitution shall count as a team substitution if the team has not exhausted its 18 team substitutions.
- 2005 No changes (P.O.E on warming up)
- 2006 No changes. (Rule Interpreters PowerPoint included emphasis on proper procedures for handling apparent concussions.)

## **Volleyball**

- 2007 Specifies appropriate time for music and sound effect and prohibits the use of artificial noisemakers at all times.
- 2008 Through POE, emphasized the importance to have all those physically participating in warm-ups in appropriate footwear and not to be using cell phones or music devices in the warm-up area. This is the responsibility of the school coaching staff.
- Emphasized proper precautions to prevent the spread of communicable disease and skin infection procedures.
- 2009 The court and adjacent playable area must be flat, smooth and free of obstructions other than required equipment and padding.
- 2010 Updated and clarified the rules regarding braces, casts, padding and prostheses.
- Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- Places a long-standing informal procedure within the rules for the state association and school to follow when an accommodation/modification of the rules for participation is due to medical, special needs or religious reasons.

## **Wrestling**

- 1982-83 Locking hands behind the back in a double arm bar from the control position as well as a neutral position is illegal.
- When a contestant competes in more than one match per day, there shall be at least one hour rest between each match. This rule now covers multiple duals the same as tournaments.
- 1983-84 In order for an individual to wrestle in the 105-pound weight class, he must weigh at least 90 pounds.
- This article has been expanded to include all bleeding rather than just a nosebleed. Injury time shall not be counted for any bleeding.
- Neutral starting position changed to a 3 inch separation.
- The minimum weight for a 98-pound contestant is 83 pounds. Starting with the 1984-85 season, the maximum weight for the heavyweight contestant is 275 pounds.
- 1984-85 Five matches allowed per day with a 45 minute rest period between them.
- Rubber, vinyl and plastic-type suits added to the list of devices used for weight reduction purposes.
- 1985-86 Unsportsmanlike conduct not during a match by a contestant and misconduct of a coach now carry a 1-point team deduction when there is removal from the premises.
- 1986-87 Tournament director, in consultation with available medical personnel and the coach of the injured contestant, shall determine the contestant's ability to continue in the tournament.
- Adoption of new weight classes, which will be optional by state adoption for the 1987-88 season are 103-112-119-125-130-135-140-145-152-160-171-189 and 275.

## Wrestling

- 1987-88 Deleted the rule which allowed a two-pound growth allowance on December 25, another pound allowance on February 1, and an additional pound on March 1.
- Adoption of two additional illegal holds – the chin-wrench and leg block.
- New weight classes made final.
- 1988-89 Growth allowances deleted.
- Back bow listed as illegal hold.
- Over scissor listed as illegal hold.
- 1989-90 No specific changes for safety.
- 1990-91 Headlock in guillotine legal only after near fall criterion has been met.
- 1991-92 Headlock is legal only when the arm is encircled at or above the elbow.
- 1992-93 When a contestant is rendered unconscious, written approval is required from a physician in order for him to continue competition in that event.
- All bleeding, other than nosebleed, is now considered as injury time.
- The rule addressing the use of medication has been deleted from the wrestling rules book and the taking of medication during a match is no longer a rules violation.
- Back bow is illegal by application.
- 1993-94 Limit of three injury time-outs per match.
- Injury time not counted for any bleeding.
- Match stopped for any bleeding, open wound or excessive blood on uniform.
- 1994-95 No changes.
- 1995-96 New guidelines for weight control program.
- Use of tobacco prohibited.
- New guidelines for communicable skin disease control.
- 1996-97 Weight control program revised.
- Overscissors illegal when pressure applied against joint causing hypertension
- Figure 4 body scissor illegal.
- Five minutes is maximum time for bleeding.
- 1997-98 Weight control program updated.

## **Wrestling**

- 1998-99 Quick weight reduction not allowed at anytime.
- 1999-00 Weigh-ins must be at the site (Dual meets—1 hr to ½ hr; Tournaments—2 hrs to ½ hr)  
Two-pound growth allowance allowed after state certification date
- 2000-01 Shoe laces must be taped  
Use of tobacco by contestants or coaches is flagrant misconduct
- 2001-02 Random draw for determining first weight class to be competed in duals  
Modified weigh-in procedures for duals/tournaments
- 2002-03 Shaved head must meet the same requirements of a shaved face.  
Modified weigh-in procedure for duals/tournaments to limit the time to make weight
- 2003-04 Should a state body fat/hydrate test they need not use the 50% rule to determine weight class  
On-site physician may overrule previous skin condition as stated on form  
Assigned physician/medical staff shall determine whether a wrestler may continue to compete after evaluating the injury (Doesn't apply to an unconscious wrestler, as only a physician can give written permission to continue following an apparent concussion).
- 2004-05 No changes
- 2005-06 Beginning with 2006-7 body fat/hydration evaluation shall be required.  
If an undershirt is allowed it shall be close fitting.  
All pads must fit snugly. Suplays and saltos are illegal.  
Competitors are restricted to a maximum of 2 lbs. when involved with consecutive days of competition.
- 2006-07 Overtime rule changed that will potentially increase the length of a match.  
Hands to the face or eyes have been restricted.



## Wrestling

2007-08

A clarification to the current communicable skin disease rule was made in that the current written documentation from a physician needs to be on an approved form from either the NFHS or a state association

Each contestant who has braces or has a special orthodontic device on their teeth, shall now be required to wear a tooth and mouth protector that covers the teeth and all areas of the braces or special orthodontic device with adequate thickness

Any coach of the contestant or the contestant now has the prerogative to default a match to the opponent at any time by informing the referee

A rule change was made to help clarify the exact procedure to follow when administering the second injury time-out.

One Point of Emphasis was addressed by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee for the 2007-08 wrestling season that addressed risk minimization - Communicable Skin Conditions.

2008-09

A clarification was made of the existence of a boundary for the coaches' restricted zone on the corner of the wrestling mat.

A wrestler's hair in its natural state, in the front, shall not extend below the eyebrows.

The physician's release form for a wrestler to participate with a particular skin condition is now to be presented at the weigh-in unless a designated, on-site meet physician is present and is able to examine the wrestler immediately after the weigh-in.

A contestant may have documentation from a physician only indicating a specific condition such as a birthmark or other non-communicable skin conditions such as psoriasis and eczema, and that documentation is valid for the duration of the season. It is valid with the understanding that a chronic condition could become secondarily infected and may require re-evaluation.

A one-pound weight allowance was added in the event of a school closing due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances, where wrestling practice(s) cannot take place due to school policies. The rule change also makes it clear as to who should be notified when weight allowance is justified.

A back flip from the standing position is now an illegal maneuver.

Unnecessary roughness is further defined to include a forceful slap to the head or face, and/or gouging or poking the eyes.

A new referee signal has been implemented to indicate when to start recovery time during a match.

The rules language for blood and a bleeding wrestler was clarified.

One Point of Emphasis was addressed by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee for the 2008-09 wrestling season that addressed risk minimization - Grooming and Medical Checks

2009-10

If a designated, on-site meet physician is present, the physician may examine a wrestler for a communicable skin disease or any other condition, either immediately prior to or immediately after the weigh-in.

## Wrestling

Meet administrators now have the option to weigh-in contestants by weight class or team(s) in tournaments.

One of the four Point of Emphasis that were addressed by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee for the 2009-10 wrestling season was Communicable Disease – Coaches and Referees Responsibilities.

2010-11 Concussion rule revised.

Rear-standing, double-knee kickback was added to the list of illegal holds/maneuvers.

Male and female contestants will now be required to wear a suitable undergarment during weigh-ins.

Two of the three Point of Emphasis that were addressed by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee for the 2010-11 wrestling season were: Concussion Recognition and Management; and Communicable Diseases.

## Boys Gymnastics

1985-87 Coach, acting as a spotter, must be present throughout a gymnast's performance on the still rings.

Vaults requiring sideward landing are void.

Working area of all events except vaulting shall be padded with at least 1 ¼" +/- ¼" of matting.

1987-89 Landing area for rings, vaulting, parallel bars and horizontal bar shall be padded with at least one base mat (1 ¼" +/- ¼") and one landing mat (3 ¾" +/- ½").

1989-91 Coach, acting as a spotter, must be present throughout a gymnast's performance on high bar.

1989-91 A gymnast may not pass through the vertical in a one-arm hang more than three times during a horizontal bar routine.

1989-91 A coach, acting as a spotter must be present throughout a gymnast's performance on the still rings.

1991-93 During in a horizontal bar routine, except for the dismount an additional 8 inch skill cushion may be used.

1993-95 A gymnast who is rendered unconscious/apparently unconscious shall not resume participation that day without written medical authorization.

A gymnast, who is bleeding, has an open wound or an excessive amount of blood on his uniform may complete his current event performance, but must receive proper treatment before returning to competition.

1997-99 Total mat thickness may be 12 inches. A sting mat may be placed on top of maximum matting on any event except floor exercise.

2001-03 Total mat thickness on parallel bars was increased to 12 inches if it includes an 8-inch skill cushion. Total mat thickness on vault, still rings and horizontal bar was increased to 16 inches if it includes an 8-inch skill cushion. On floor exercise, one mat up to 4 inches thick may be placed in one location on the floor exercise mat for landing a D-skill.

**Boys**  
**Gymnastics**

During a still rings, parallel bars or horizontal bar exercise or vault, an additional 8-inch skill cushion may be used.

During a floor exercise routine, one mat up to 4 inches thick may be placed in one location for a D-skill landing.

Gymnast passes through the lower vertical in a one-arm hang more than two times during an exercise, medium deduction each time.

2003-05 A medical alert must be taped and may be visible

Athletic equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn.

A spotter is permitted at the edge of the floor exercise mat for a D-value tumbling skill.

If the board is placed under the center of the parallel bars, it must be removed immediately after the mount is completed.

No safety rules changes.

2005-07 Total matting for parallel bars shall be 12 inches or up to 8 inches on top of a manufactured platform.

An additional mat up to 8 inches thick may be used for mounting pommel horse, but not when remounting after a fall.

The use of the vault table is required beginning with the 2005-2006 season.

2005-07 A safety collar is required when a roundoff-entry vault is performed. If it is not used, the vault performed is void.

A coach must be present to spot any roundoff-entry vault. The vault is void if the coach is not present.

If a gymnast balks, a 1.0 deduction is taken and he is given a second trial. If the gymnast commits a second balk, the vault is void.

**Boys**  
**Gymnastics**

- 2009 Recommended a change in thickness of newly purchased landing mats to accommodate the new minimum thickness being manufactured
- Require vaulting board to be available to all contestants throughout warm-ups.
- The pistons/pedestal (vertical uprights) of the vaulting table shall be padded with the manufactured protective padding.
- Specified the maximum thickness of the run-up strip shall be 1 inch thick (+/- ½ inch).
- Only a manufactured hand placement mat may be placed on the run-up strip for vaulting and a manufactured sting mat shall not be permitted.
- Deleted skills no longer appropriate for boys gymnastics, due to advancement of gymnast's skills.
- Reclassified several skills to reflect current trend in boys gymnastics.
- Emphasized proper precautions to prevent the spread of communicable disease and skin infection procedures.

**Lacrosse**

**Boys**

- 2000 First year of publication
- 2001 Player's shoes must meet same standard as football shoes  
Jewelry not permitted; medial or religious medals must be taped to body
- 2002 Cast must be padded and a physician's letter must be presented prior to contest.
- Eye shield must permit 100% light transmission and they must be molded and rigid.
- Game officials may call time-outs for unusual weather conditions.
- 2003 No jewelry permitted
- An apparently unconscious player must have written permission before reentering the same contest
- NFHS Lightning Policy included
- 2004 If ball retrievers are used, they must wear a lacrosse helmet and may not stand directly behind the goal.
- 2005 To prevent other defensive players from stepping in the goal when the goalie leaves the game to replace broken equipment, play should be suspended immediately if the goalie's stick or any of the other required goalie's equipment becomes broken or dislodged.
- The color of tooth and mouth protectors must be of a readily visible color other than white or clear.
- A goal will not be counted if the head comes off the stick on a successful shot.
- Injured player must leave the game until the next allowable point of substitution.

## Lacrosse

### Boys

- 2006 Clearly states that medical alert medals must be taped to the body, but may be visible.
- 2007 Clarifies that the designated goalkeeper's crosse must be used by the goalkeeper and that a properly equipped goalkeeper must be on the field at all times.
- The jersey shall completely cover the shoulder pads.
- A team shall begin the game with at least 10 players or it forfeits the game.
- 2008 Stipulates in the rules that the tooth and mouth protector can cover either the upper or lower teeth.
- Clarifies that tinted eye glasses are allowed unless a player is also wearing a clear, molded and non-rigid helmet eye shield. Also defines an eye shield as a helmet eye shield to more clearly identify that the eye shield is attached to the helmet.
- Stipulates that gloves must cover the fingers and palms and that gloves manufactured without a palm are not allowed.
- 2009 Revision to both rule 2-1-1 and 6-5-2t which defines a procedure and penalty should a team fail to have a legally equipped goalkeeper at the beginning of the game. This change was implemented to minimize risk for other defensive players by preventing them from stepping into the goal area to play goalkeeper without the proper equipment.
- Revision adopted which specifies that a player receiving a pass cannot be checked unless the ball is within five yards of that player. This change minimizes risk for players receiving the pass.
- Included a point of emphasis in the rules book stressing the importance of enforcing the rule regarding illegal body checking to minimize risk for players.
- Included a point of emphasis in the rules book stressing the importance of enforcing the rule which requires that the end of the crosse have either a legal cap-plug or be properly and adequately taped to minimize risk for all players.

## Lacrosse

### Boys

2010

Any suspension of play.... Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion) This time-out is an official's time-out.....

Rationale: Clarification from NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

Items that, in the opinion of the officials, endanger that individual or other players. Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, splints, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow or upper arm is prohibited unless it is necessary to protect an injury. If worn, it must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½ inch thick. Knee and ankle braces which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding.

Rationale: Clarification from NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

If the goalkeeper loses his stick with the ball in it within his goal crease, the whistle shall be blown and the ball shall be awarded to the defensive team laterally outside the goal area.

Rationale: Risk minimization.

## Water Polo

2010

Changed the guidelines and procedures for identifying and removing a player who exhibits signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.