



## 2017 Approved Baseball Pitch Count Rule Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is a pitch count?**

A pitch count rule is based on the number of legal or illegal pitches thrown to a batter during an at-bat. Warm-up pitches allowed before the game, between innings, or those allowed by an umpire due to injury or during a game delay, do not count toward the pitch count.

### **Does the pitch count apply for an illegal pitch or foul tip?**

Yes, the pitch count applies to every pitch thrown to a batter.

### **Why is a pitch count rule necessary in Washington?**

NFHS baseball rules are followed for all interscholastic baseball games in Washington. The NFHS baseball rules now mandate that each state association develop a pitching restriction based on the number of pitches thrown.

### **What is the timeline for implementation of a pitch count rule?**

The proposed pitch count rule was approved on third and final reading by the WIAA Executive Board during its January 29-30, 2017, meeting. The rule will go into effect beginning with the 2017 spring season.

### **Is the limit based upon pitches thrown during a game or during a day?**

The limit is per day, not per game. It would be possible for a pitcher to pitch in both games of a double header, depending upon the number of pitches thrown. If a game is suspended for any reason, the daily pitch count rule remains in effect.

### **Will a pitcher be able to complete an at bat regardless of the pitch count?**

A pitcher is not allowed to exceed the highest pitch count limit. If close to the limit, the pitcher must either be replaced prior to the batter stepping up to the plate or during the at-bat.

### **What is the required rest period?**

A day of rest is defined as a calendar day. Example: A pitcher throws 65 pitches on Monday. By rule, the pitcher is not eligible to pitch again until after two days' rest. He would be eligible to pitch again on Thursday.

### **Even though not eligible to pitch, could the pitcher fill other defensive positions on the field?**

Yes, although consideration should be given to what position he is assigned once he is done pitching. Consideration should be given to the throwing requirement of the fielding position once the pitcher vacates the mound.

### **Who is responsible for counting the pitches?**

The home scorebook will be the official record regarding pitch count. Both the visiting and home scorekeeper should compare the counts after each inning. If there is a discrepancy, the home scorebook will be the official record.

### **Will umpires back up the pitch count?**

It is not the responsibility of the umpires to enforce the pitching rule and umpires will not mediate pitch counts. All concerns about pitch counts need to be addressed by the league.

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### **What is the penalty if a pitcher exceeds the maximum daily limit?**

Violations of the pitch count rule are considered in the same manner as a school using an ineligible player. The pitcher becomes ineligible to pitch when the maximum daily limit is reached. If the maximum daily limit is exceeded, the pitcher is ineligible and the contest will be forfeited. The offending team may appeal.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Coaches are encouraged to develop a pitching philosophy that includes the instruction in proper throwing mechanics, broadening the number of players who will become pitchers on their staffs, and developing a “work up” plan so that a pitcher is not throwing the maximum allowable pitches from the first day of competition.

Coaches must be cognizant of each pitcher’s “fatigue threshold” (can be measured by velocity and accuracy among other factors) and adjust pitches to accommodate, learning what constitutes throwing “hurt” and throwing “injured”. Each pitcher will be different in this ability and threshold. In essence, the coach must learn the behaviors of his/her players.

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##### **29.5.0 PITCHER LIMITATION**

**29.5.1** The pitching limitation rule applies during all regular season and postseason games, as well as to tied, suspended, discontinued or protested games.

**29.5.2** The pitching limitation rule is based upon the number of legal or illegal pitches thrown during a calendar day with a maximum of 105 pitches in a calendar day.

##### **29.5.3 High school pitching limitation**

# PITCHES	REQUIRED REST
76 - 105	3 calendar days
51 - 75	2 calendar days
31 - 50	1 calendar day
1 - 30	0 days

##### **29.5.4 Counting pitches**

- A.** Every legal or illegal pitch thrown from the pitching mound to a batter will count toward the pitching limitation.
- B.** The home scorebook will be official recording for pitch counts.

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##### **29.65.0 PITCHER LIMITATION**

**29.65.1** The pitching limitation rule applies during all regular season games, as well as to tied, suspended, discontinued or protested games.

**29.65.2** The pitching limitation rule is based upon the number of legal or illegal pitches thrown during a calendar day with a maximum of 80 pitches in a calendar day.

##### **29.65.3 Middle level pitching limitation**

# PITCHES	REQUIRED REST
61 - 80	3 calendar days
41 - 60	2 calendar days
21 - 40	1 calendar day
1 - 20	0 days

##### **29.65.4 Counting pitches**

- A.** Every legal or illegal pitch thrown from the pitching mound to a batter will count toward the pitching limitation.
- B.** The home scorebook will be official recording for pitch counts.