

National Wiffle League Association National Tournament
2016 Rules
Adopted 5/7/2016

The Official Rules of Baseball and the Case Book of the Official Rules of Baseball as adopted by the Major League Baseball Playing Rules Committee will govern all tournament circumstances, with the following exceptions.

Tournament Rules

TEAM ELIGIBILITY: Teams are required to meet requirements as well as submit information to the host committee as requested. Teams who fail to meet the requirements or submit information to the host committee shall be declared ineligible for the tournament and replaced. The rules committee will be the final arbiter of team eligibility.

TOURNAMENT FORMAT:

Regionals: Teams accepted for the tournament shall be assigned to one of four regional locations. Each team assigned to a regional shall play every other team in their regional. A computer generated schedule shall be created in advance in which home and visiting teams are assigned, and each team shall have an even number of home and visitor games. Teams who do not participate at the regional tournament, or who forfeit more than one game, shall not be eligible to move on to the pool play round of the tournament.

Pool Play: Once regionals are completed, teams who finished in the top 8 of the previous year's double elimination tournament, plus additional teams up to 16 total teams shall move on to the pool play round. Should a top 16 team not be able to make it to pool play, the next team in seeding order shall replace them. Teams will be seeded based on total points from regionals, in which each team gets 2 points for each win, 1 point for each tie, and 0 points for each loss. In the event of a tie between teams with the same winning percentage, the tie will be broken in this order: 1) head-to-head play 2) run differential, 3) total bases. Teams shall be placed into four pools of four teams each by random draw the evening prior to the first day of pool play games. Pools shall be balanced so that the best four teams following the regionals will be split into different pools, the second best four teams will be split into different pools, the third best four teams will be split into four pools, and the final four teams will be split into different pools. Teams will each play three pool play games, one against each other team in their pool, prior to the start of the double elimination tournament. A computer generated schedule shall be created in advance in which home and visiting teams are assigned, provided that no team shall have more than two home or two visitor games.

Double Elimination: Once pool play is completed, all teams will be seeded into a double elimination tournament bracket based on their pool play record. Teams will be seeded based on total points from

43 pool play, in which each team gets 2 points for each win, 1 point for each tie, and 0 points for each loss.
44 In the event of a tie between teams with the same winning percentage, the tie will be broken in this
45 order: 1) head-to-head play 2) run differential, 3) total bases.

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47 TIME LIMIT: Regional and pool play games shall be time limited, regardless of whether or not there is a
48 winning team. No new inning shall be started after 45 minutes from the first pitch of the game, except in
49 the event of a weather delay, in which case the time of the weather delay shall not be counted. Should
50 the home team be ahead at any time after 45 minutes from the first pitch the game shall immediately
51 end. Ties are allowed.

52
53 ROSTERS: Rosters must be officially submitted to the tournament listserve by the Manager no later than
54 12 PM on the day before the first scheduled games of the regional round of the tournament are to take
55 place. Rosters must be no less than 4 players and no more than 8 players. Following the regional round,
56 up to 6 roster changes can be made, with the final roster for the pool play and double elimination
57 rounds being due no later than 12 PM on the day before the first scheduled games of the pool play
58 round.

59
60 COMMISSIONER OR LEAGUE PRESIDENT: Anytime the rules refer to League President or Commissioner
61 of Baseball this shall refer to the Rules Committee of the tournament, which shall consist of one voting
62 member from each team participating in the tournament, designated by each team's manager.

63
64 Playing Equipment

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66 1.00: BALL: Only unaltered baseball sized Wiffle ball brand balls with be used (8 slots on one side).

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68 1.01: BASES AND PITCHERS PLATE All Bases will be 45' apart, the front edge of the Pitcher's Plate shall
69 be 45' from the back point of home plate.

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71 1.02: STRIKE BOARD: The strike zone will consist of a board that measures 20" wide by 32" tall. The
72 strike zone will be 12" off the ground, and located 2.5' behind the back point of home plate (47'6" from
73 the front of the pitching rubber.

74
75 1.03: BAT: Only unaltered "classic Yellow" wiffle bats are to be used. Bats may be taped on the molded
76 grip area.

77
78 1.04: GLOVES: Baseball gloves are NOT allowed while playing a defensive position.

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80 1.05: FOOTWEAR: No metal spikes are allowed. Plastic cleats or turf cleats are permitted. No bare feet
81 allowed.

82
83 Team and Game Regulations

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85 2.00: TEAM PLAYER REQUIREMENTS: Minimum of 3 players per team to play a regulation game. 6
86 player's maximum may be in the lineup in a game. Any batters who are not in a designated fielding
87 position shall be considered Extra Hitters. Extra hitters are treated the same as the fielding positions for
88 defensive substitution purposes, and may be freely rotated.

89

90 2.01: PITCHER DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTIONS – Once a player has been in the pitchers position, and has
91 been removed from that position, the player may not return as the pitcher in that same game.

92

93 2.02: AGE REQUIREMENT: All players MUST be at least 18 years of age.

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95 2.03: FIELDING: Teams are required to have 3 fielders; two fielders and one pitcher.

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97 2.04: GAME LENGTH: A regulation game is 6 Innings.

98

99 2.05: MERCY RULE: Games shall be over if either team leads by 10 runs after 4 innings, or after 3.5
100 innings if the home team is ahead.

101

102 2.06: RAIN OUTS: Games become official after the 4 innings, or after 3.5 innings if the home team is
103 ahead. MLB Rule 4.12a does not apply to either the pool play or double elimination tournament games.

104

105 2.07: TEAM TARTYNESS: If a team does not have enough players to field a team 15 minutes past the
106 scheduled start time of the game, the umpire shall forfeit the game to the team present, at a score of 6-
107 0.

108

109 2.08: INJURED OR LEAVING PLAYERS: If a player starts the game, they must finish the game, or they are
110 considered an automatic out when they are due up. If the Team has a substitute not in the current
111 lineup, but on the roster, they can sub him into the game in place of the leaving or hurt player.

112

113 Pitching

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115 3.00: SPEED LIMITS: Pitching for this tournament is fast.

116

117 3.01: GRIPS AND THROW: Any type of throw, overhand or underhand is allowed. Any type of grip is
118 allowed, but no deforming or altering the ball. No "loading" the ball with rocks, dirt or other debris.

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120 3.02: BALKS: Balks are legal. Pitchers must have their foot in contact with the pitching rubber when they
121 release the ball.

122

123 3.03: ROTATION: Pitcher rotation is required. A pitcher who pitches 2 or fewer Innings Pitched in a
124 game shall be eligible to pitch in the next game played for that team. A pitcher who pitches more than 2
125 Innings Pitched in a game shall not be eligible to pitch in the next game played for that team. The
126 rotation requirement will be reset and start fresh when moving from the regional games to the pool play

127 games, and from the pool play games to the double elimination tournament games. For the purposes of
128 this rule, a “bye” game does not count as a game played, but a forfeited game does count as a game
129 played. Managers shall indicate on the lineup card for each game any pitchers who are NOT eligible to
130 pitch in that game before providing a copy to the umpire and opposing manager.

131

132 Batting

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134 4.00: BUNTING: Bunting is not allowed.

135

136 4.01: STRIKES: Batters will be charged with a called strike when 1) a legally delivered pitch hits the
137 strike board without first touching any other object, including the ground, 2) a batter, intentionally or
138 unintentionally, extends any part of his body outside of the batter’s box and interferes with a pitched
139 ball before it has passed the strike board.

140

141 4.02: HIT BY PITCH: Batters that are hit with a pitch and do not swing will be awarded a ball, but will
142 not be awarded first base for the reason of being hit with a pitch.

143

144 4.03: FOUL BALL ARC: An arc between the first and third base foul lines shall be drawn 20’ from home
145 plate. This line will be treated as a foul line in the exact same manner as the other foul lines between
146 home and first or third base.

147

148 4.04: DROPPED THIRD STRIKE: Batters may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike.

149

150 Walks and Strikeouts

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152 5.00: BASE ON BALLS: Five balls shall entitle a batter to a base on ball, a walk.

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154 5.01: FOUL TIP: A ball which is fouled off the bat and then hits the strike board without first touching any
155 other object, including the ground is a foul tip. A foul tip is dead the moment it touches the strike board.

156

157 Base running

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159 6.00: LEADING OFF BASE OR STEALING: There shall be no leading off or stealing. A runner must remain
160 in contact with the base until the batter makes contact with the ball, unless time has been called by the
161 umpire.

162

163 COMMENT: A baserunner who leaves base before the batter makes contact with the ball shall
164 be called out. If a runner leaves base at all on a swing and a miss, if the umpire has not clearly
165 called time following the swing and miss and before the runner left base, shall be called out.

166

167 6.01: COURTESY RUNNERS/GHOST RUNNERS: In the event that a batter is due up to bat in the batting
168 order and is still on base, another player from the player’s team may run in their place without being

169 counted as a substitution. If no player is available as a courtesy runner, the team may use a “ghost
170 runner”. The ghost runner must be the trailing runner on base. All ghost runners must be forced to
171 advance to the next base by the batter-runner, and a force out at a base for the ghost runner can be
172 made if the fielder completes the force play before the batter-runner that is forcing the ghost runner
173 reaches first base.

174

175 COMMENT: The bases are loaded, but a ghost runner is on first base because a team only has
176 three players and one of them has to bat. A ground ball is hit to the left fielder, who grabs the
177 ball and steps on second base before the batter-runner gets to the first base. The ghost runner
178 is forced out at second, and the batter-runner is safe at first on a fielders choice.

179

180 6.02: MISSED PEGGING ATTEMPTS: Runners may advance at will, as long as the overthrown ball stays
181 inside the fair field of play. Any ball thrown into the bench area or in/around/beyond the backstop will
182 be considered out of play. If the ball continues into foul territory, the lead runner is awarded the base
183 they were headed plus one base.

184

185 COMMENT: A runner is trying to stretch a single into a double, and the fielder throws the ball to
186 try to peg the runner as he’s sliding into second base. The ball misses the runner, and rolls past
187 the pitcher and past the foul ball arc so that it is on the foul side between the pitchers rubber
188 and home plate. The runner has passed second base by the time the ball rolls past the foul arc,
189 the ball is dead, and the runner is award home plate, because they were heading toward third,
190 plus one additional base.

191

192 6.03: PEGGING: Fielders may throw the ball at runners. Runners struck will be out. Runners struck with
193 a thrown ball which first hits any player, a base, or the ground first, will be out. Any balls that strike a
194 runner, regardless of whether the runner is safe or out, will cause an immediate dead ball situation.

195

196 COMMENT: It does not matter if the ball is knocked loose on the tag, as long as the ball “strikes”
197 the runner, the runner is out. On a peg or a tag, if a defensive player maintains possession of
198 the ball, the ball is live, if a defensive player loses possession of the ball, the ball is dead.

199

200 Fielding and Outs

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202 7.00: PITCHERS CIRCLE FORCE OUT: In addition to any other method of putting out runners, any force
203 out may be made if a player obtains control of the live, batted or thrown ball, in a circle that is 10’ in
204 diameter and centered on the midpoint of pitcher’s rubber, before the runner reaches a base. Should
205 there be more than one force out in play, only one force out shall be made on a single play. The lead
206 force shall be the first one affected, but should it not have been in time, subsequent forces will be
207 enforced in continuing lead order.

208

209 COMMENT: Runners on first and second. Batter grounds a ball to the fielder, who throws it to
210 the pitcher. The runner going from second to third is the lead force, but he gets to base before

211 the pitcher has the ball in the circle, so he is safe. The runner going from first to second is the
212 next lead force, and he doesn't not get to second before the pitcher gets the ball, so he is out.
213 The batter-runner is safe at first on a fielder's choice.

214
215 7.01 PITCHERS CIRCLE DEAD BALL: Once a player has obtained control of the ball in the circle, the play
216 shall be immediately dead and any runners between bases shall return or advance to the base they are
217 closest to at the time of the dead ball.

218
219 COMMENT: Runners on first and second. Batter grounds a ball to the fielder, who throws it to
220 the pitcher. The runner going from second to third is the lead force, but he gets to base before
221 the pitcher has the ball in the circle, so he is safe. The runner going from first to second is the
222 next lead force, and he doesn't not get to second before the pitcher gets the ball, so he is out.
223 The batter-runner is safe at first on a fielder's choice. If the runner at third was past third base
224 when the pitcher caught the ball, the runner would be awarded the base they are closest to at
225 the time.

226
227 COMMENT: Again the situation if a fly ball or line drive that is caught inside the pitchers circle
228 creates a unique situation in regards to this rule. If runners are on base, they may usually tag
229 and advance on a caught fly ball. However, in this situation, in which a player is already in the
230 pitchers circle when they catch the ball, runners may not advance, and are not awarded the next
231 base on the dead ball. Runners may not advance on a caught fly ball until the player has caught
232 the ball. And when the player catches the ball inside the pitcher's circle, it is immediately dead,
233 and the runner is still "on base". So they would not be able to advance. If they are off base, and
234 did not tag up they would return to the base.

235
236 7.02: INFIELD FLY: There shall be no infield fly rule.

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238 7.03: BUCKET: A five gallon bucket of balls shall be allowed to be placed near the pitchers circle, but not
239 in front of the pitchers' plate. Any batted ball that hits the bucket, or any balls that have fallen out of
240 the bucket, shall result in an immediate dead ball, and all runners including the batter-runner shall
241 advance one base. A thrown ball that hits the bucket, or any balls that have fallen out of the bucket,
242 shall be live and in play. A thrown ball that stays inside the bucket, shall result in an immediate dead ball
243 and runners advance or return based on the pitcher's hand rule.