

SOFTBALL

DP/FLEX

RULE

Guidelines

DP/FLEX RULE

NFHS Rule 3, Section 3, Article 6

- The Designated Player (DP)/FLEX Rule replaces the DH (Designated Hitter) Rule
- Allows for more players participation and flexibility in the game
- Gives coaches the option to:
 - not use DP/FLEX at all
 - use it to the same extent as the DH was used
 - use the DP/FLEX option to its fullest potential
- A DP does not have to be used
- If a DP is used, it must be noted on the starting lineup. The DP position always remains an option for use in the lineup, as long as there are eligible substitutes
- Once a team starts the game with the DP/Flex on their lineup card, those positions are available for the entire game.
 - As with all players they only have one reentry, but the position is always available for an eligible substitute to enter that position

LINEUP CARD

- The DP is the offensive player and must remain in the same batting position for the entire game.
- The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (FLEX) will be placed in the #10 spot in the lineup.
- If replaced by a substitute, the DP position remains in the lineup.
- A starting or substitute DP may re-enter the game one time as long as the DP returns to the original position in the batting order.
- A team using the DP starts the game with ten players, but could end the game with nine or ten players

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		7
	SUB.		
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		DP
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
5	9 RODGERS		9
	SUB.		
13	10 BROWN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	GREEN		

SUBSTITUTING FOR THE DP

- The DP may be replaced by:
 - Pinch runner
 - Pinch hitter
 - FLEX
 - Substitute

- In all cases, if the DP has been replaced, the DP has left the game and has one re-entry permitted.

- In the sample lineup card to the right, Baker pinch-runs for Cooper (the DP):
 - Cooper has left the game
 - Cooper has one re-entry remaining
 - Baker is now the DP

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		7
	SUB.		
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		DP
4	SUB. BAKER		DP
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		9
	SUB.		
18	10 BROWN (FLEX)		1
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	GREEN		

THE FLEX MAY PLAY OFFENSE & THE DP MAY RE-ENTER

- If the FLEX runs or bats for the DP, the DP leaves the game. The FLEX (Brown) is now batting in the #7 position and the batting lineup continues to #9.

NO.	AGE	PLAYER	NO.	AGE	PLAYER
12	6	HARRIS	1	4	BLAVER
17	4	ABLE	2	6	
20	5	THOMAS	3	5	
24	7	JONES	4	7	
15	5	ALEXANDER	5	5	
22	7	MOORE	6	7	
25	7	MOORE	7	5	
7	5	MORRIS	8	7	
3	7	RODGERS	9	7	
18	10	BROWN (LEW)	10	1	
10	10	SUBSTITUTES	11	10	
4	10	HOWELL	12	10	
5	10	BAKER	13	10	
55	10	GREEN	14	10	

POS.	NO.	PLAYER	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2423	2424	2425	2426	2427	2428	2429	2430	2431	2432	2433	2434	2435	2436	2437	2438	2439	2440	2441	2442	2443	2444	2445	2446	2447	2448	2449	2450	2451	2452	2453	2454	2455	2456	2457	2458	2459	2460	2461	2462	2463	2464	2465	2466	2467	2468	2469	2470	2471	2472	2473	2474	2475	2476	2477	2478	2479	2480	2481	2482	2483	2484	2485	2486	2487	2488	2489	2490	2491	2492	2493	2494	2495	2496	2497	2498	2499	2500	2501	2502	2503	2504	2505	2506	2507	2508	2509	2510	2511	2512	2513	2514	2515	2516	2517	2518	2519	2520	2521	2522	2523	2524	2525	2526	2527	2528	2529	2530	2531	2532	2533	2534	2535	2536	2537	2538	2539	2540	2541	2542	2543	2544	2545	2546	2547	2548	2549	2550	2551	2552	2553	2554	2555	2556	2557	2558	2559	2560	2561	2562	2563	2564	2565	2566	2567	2568	2569	2570	2571	2572	2573	2574	2575	2576	2577	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594	2595	2596	2597	2598	2599	2600	2601	2602	2603	2604	2605	2606	2607	2608	2609	2610	2611	2612	2613	2614	2615	2616	2617	2618	2619	2620	2621	2622	2623	2624	2625	2626	2627	2628	2629	2630	2631	2632	2633	2634	2635	2636	2637	2638	2639	2640	2641	2642	2643	2644	2645	2646	2647	2648	2649	2650	2651	2652	2653	2654	2655	2656	2657	2658	2659	2660	2661	2662	2663	2664	2665	2666	2667	2668	2669	2670	2671	2672	2673	2674	2675	2676	2677	2678	2679	2680	2681	2682	2683	2684	2685	2686	2687	2688	2689	2690	2691	2692	2693	2694	2695	2696	2697	2698	2699	2700	2701	2702	2703	2704	2705	2706	2707	2708	2709	2710	2711	2712	2713	2714	2715	2716	2717	2718	2719	2720	2721	2722	2723	2724	2725	2726	2727	2728	2729	2730	2731	2732	2733	2734	2735	2736	2737	2738	2739	2740	2741	2742	2743	2744	2745	2746	2747	2748	2749	2750	2751	2752	2753	2754	2755	2756	2757	2758	2759	2760	2761	2762	2763	2764	2765	2766	2767	2768	2769	2770	2771	2772	2773	2774	2775	2776	2777	2778	2779	2780	2781	2782	2783	2784	2785	2786	2787	2788	2789	2790	2791	2792	2793	2794	2795	2796	2797	2798	2799	2800	2801	2802	2803	2804	2805	2806	2807	2808	2809	2810	2811	2812	2813	2814	2815	2816	2817	2818	2819	2820	2821	2822	2823	2824	2825	2826	2827	2828	2829	2830	2831	2832	2833	2834	2835	2836	2837	2838	2839	2840	2841	2842	2843	2844	2845	2846	2847	2848	2849	2850	2851	2852	2853	2854	2855	2856	2857	2858	2859	2860	2861	2862	2863	2864	2865	2866	2867	2868	2869	2870	2871	2872	2873	2874	2875	2876	2877	2878	2879	2880	2881	2882	2883	2884	2885	2886	2887	2888	2889	2890	2891	2892	2893	2894	2895	2896	2897	2898	2899	2900	2901	2902	2903	2904	2905	2906	2907	2908	2909	2910	2911	2912	2913	2914	2915	2916	2917	2918	2919	2920	2921	2922	2923	2924	2925	2926	2927	2928	2929	2930	2931	2932	2933	2934	2935	2936	2937	2938	2939	2940	2941	2942	2943	2944	2945	2946	2947	2948	2949	2950	2951	2952	2953	2954	2955	2956	2957	2958	2959	2960	2961	2962	2963	2964	2965	2966	2967	2968	2969	2970	2971	2972	2973	2974	2975	2976	2977	2978	2979	2980	2981	2982	2983	2984	2985	2986	2987	2988	2989	2990	2991	2992	2993	2994	2995	2996	2997	2998	2999	3000
17	1	HARRIS																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															

- When the DP (Cooper) re-enters to bat or run for the FLEX (Brown):
 - FLEX returns to the #10 position
 - FLEX plays defense only
 - FLEX has never left the game

THE DP MAY PLAY DEFENSE

- Cooper goes in to pitch.
- Brown has left the game (may re-enter).
- The lineup is down to nine players.

NO	PLAYER	POS.
19	HARRIS	6
17	ABLE	4
20	THOMAS	8
24	JONES	7
15	ALEXANDER	3
22	MOORE	2
25	COOPER	5
7	MORRIS	3
3	RODGERS	2
13	BROWN	1
10	SUBSTITUTES	NO
4	HOWELL	4
6	BAKER	5
6	SMITH	5
55	GREEN	5

NO.	POS.	PLAYER	NO.	POS.
19	1	HARRIS	5	
	GUARD			
17	2	ABLE		
	GUARD			
20	3	THOMAS	8	
	FORWARD			
24	4	JONES	7	
	FORWARD			
15	5	ALEXANDER	3	
	FORWARD			
22	6	MOORE	2	
	FORWARD			
25	7	COOPER	AS	
	GUARD			
7	8	MORRIS	5	
	FORWARD			
9	9	RODGERS	9	
	GUARD			
13	10	HOWELL	7	
	FORWARD			
	POS.	SUBSTITUTES		
10		HOWELL		
4		BAKER		
6		SMITH		
55		GREEN		

- The DP may also play defense at any position
- If the DP plays defense for any players other than the FLEX, those players still bat and have not left the game.
- Cooper plays second base and still bats #7.
- Able no longer plays second base (defense) but still bats #2.
- Able has not left the game.

KEY POINTS

Since the DP and FLEX split the offensive and defensive jobs of one player, they are “tied together” or “linked” and the FLEX can only play offense for the DP.

ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION - The FLEX may not go into one of the first nine positions for someone other than the DP. This is illegal.

The role of the DP/FLEX is never terminated.

A team may go from ten to nine players and back to ten players any number of times during the game and the game may end with ten or nine players.

DEFENSE

The DP can never be on defense only. If they don't play offense (use their bat), they have left the game.

The DP and the FLEX can play defense at the same time. FLEX can keep using their mitt and the DP can use someone else's.

OFFENSE

The FLEX can never be on offense only. If they don't play defense (use their mitt), they have left the game.

The DP and the FLEX can never be on offense at the same time. They are tied together and only one player can play offense in their (DP's) position in the lineup.

SOFTBALL DP/FLEX RULE

Sample Exercises

SAMPLE LINEUP CARD

The sample exercises to follow will use this lineup card and progress through a series of substitution examples.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		DP
	SUB.		
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		7
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		1
	SUB.		
18	10 GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	BROWN		

SAMPLE EXERCISE #1

- Jones (DP) bats and gets on base safely.
- Offensive coach asks for time for a change - "Green will run for Jones."
- Green (FLEX) runs for Jones (DP) and Jones has left the game.
- NOTE- Jones has left the game (no longer Playing offense), they still have one re-entry. Green is now playing offense and defense.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		DP
	SUB.		
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
15	7 COOPER		7
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		1
	SUB.		
18	10 GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	BROWN		

SAMPLE EXERCISE #2

- When up to bat, Green singles to left.
- The offensive coach asks for time for a change - "Smith running for Green and Green will still be playing right field."
- Smith (substitute) is running for Green (FLEX) - Smith is the new DP.
- Green stays in the game playing right field (defense only).
- Green (FLEX) has not left the game.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		DP
6	SUB.		DP
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		7
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		1
	SUB.		
18	10 GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	BROWN		

SAMPLE EXERCISE #3

- In the 4th inning, the offensive coach asks for time for another change - "Jones to re-enter and bat for Smith."
- Jones (DP) re-enters for Smith.
- Jones has used her one re-entry.
- Smith has left the game and has one re-entry remaining.
- This is no different than a substitute/re-entry anywhere else in the lineup.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		DP
6	SUB. SMITH		DP
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		7
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		1
	SUB.		
18	10 GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	BROWN		

SAMPLE EXERCISE #4

- Jones (DP) is to play defense in center field for Thomas.
- Jones (DP) is now playing offense (using Their bat) and defense (using Thomas' mitt)
- Thomas still bats in #3 in the lineup and is playing offense only (still using their bat) and has not left the game.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		BR 3
6	SUB. SMITH		DP
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		7
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		1
	SUB.		
18	10 GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	BROWN		

SAMPLE EXERCISE #5

- An inning later, the defensive coach asks for time to make another change - "Jones will move to right field and play defense for Green; Thomas will go back to center field."
- Jones (DP) is to play defense in right field for Green (FLEX).
- Thomas goes back to center field.
- Jones (DP) is still playing offense and Defense (now using the FLEX's mitt).
- Green (FLEX) has left the game (still has no re-entry) since she is not playing defense.
- Green (FLEX) still has one re-entry.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19	1 HARRIS		6
	SUB.		
17	2 ABLE		4
	SUB.		
20	3 THOMAS		8
	SUB.		
24	4 JONES		DP
6	SUB. SMITH		DP
15	5 ALEXANDER		3
	SUB.		
22	6 MOORE		2
	SUB.		
25	7 COOPER		7
	SUB.		
7	8 MORRIS		5
	SUB.		
3	9 RODGERS		1
	SUB.		
18	10 GREEN (FLEX)		9
	SUB.		
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	BROWN		