

2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Rules Changes and Common Practice Updates

Rule 2	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
New 2.1	<p><i>Regarding artificial turf...</i> A synthetic turf surface field may be used for collegiate competition. It is recommended that the outfield portion be green and, if there is an infield portion, it be brown and have shorter blades than the outfield portion. <i>Note-it is still highly recommended that a skinned infield be used (See Rule 2.14).</i></p> <p>Rationale: Provides direction to those considering an artificial infield or outfield surface.</p>		No changes
2.2	<p><i>Regarding the backstop padding as noted in past rulebooks...</i> When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, it shall be padded from dugout to dugout....</p> <p>Rationale: Changes a recommendation (which was approved in 2011) to a requirement which goes into effect for the 2016 season.</p>		
2.10	<p><i>Regarding enclosing the field side of the dugout...</i> It is highly recommended that the field side of the dugout be protected with netting or fencing no less than 6 feet from the floor of the dugout except for the designated entrances/exits. Protection is required by the 2018 season.</p> <p>Rationale: Creates a separation of players and field. In addition, this change will keep more errant throws in play and reduce the number of awarded bases. Finally, the netting/fencing will provide protection from foul batted balls and errant throws to those in the dugout. Note that the old last sentence (Consideration should be given to enclose the field side of dugouts with netting or fencing) will be deleted by 2018.</p>		