



## Oregon School Activities Association

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To: Athletic Directors and Head Baseball Coaches  
From: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director  
Subject: Baseball Pitch Count reminders

### USA Baseball Pitch Smart Guidelines

<http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/>

The OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) supports the Pitch Smart guidelines created by USA Baseball and MLB. The two entities have teamed up to help young players reduce arm injuries by providing a comprehensive resource for safe pitching practices. Research has shown that pitching too much, particularly at a young age, can increase a pitcher's risk of injury. Pitch Smart is a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers. The NFHS has a new course offering (<https://www.nfhslearn.com>), Introduction to Pitch Smart, hosted by Hall of Famer, John Smoltz, the course aims to explain the principles behind Pitch Smart, a joint arm care initiative between Major League Baseball and USA Baseball. This course includes topics such as risks of arm injuries, common misconceptions, and the Pitch Smart guideline. <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61054/introduction-to-pitch-smart>

### Participation Limitations, Baseball

<http://www.osaa.org/governance/handbooks/>

The OSAA Executive Board passed a change to the pitching limitation policy that was recommended for 2016 and is required for the 2017 season. The change, which was created by the OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and Oregon Athletic Coaches Association, moves away from an innings limit to a pitch count limit that includes required rest days depending on the number of pitches thrown. For the 2017 season, schools will be required to enter the pitch counts of players through the OSAA website following each varsity game. It is recommended that lower levels utilize the OSAA website, but not mandated. Lower levels are still required to record pitch counts and follow the pitch count limits and corresponding days of rest.

### Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. *What constitutes a pitch?*  
A. *Any throw by the pitcher that moves in the direction of home plate during live ball. Every pitch must be counted, remember to take into account all pitches, including the pitches thrown that a batter fouls off after having two strikes and pitches thrown where an offensive/batter's interference is called. Warm-up pitches are not counted in the pitch count.*
2. Q. *Does the pitching limitation count for the second game of a double header?*  
A. *The policy is based on days, not games. Therefore, a pitcher may pitch in both games of a double header, but the total pitch count for the day will be what is considered when determining the days of rest required. The total number of pitches for the day cannot exceed the 110 pitches.*
3. Q. *Is there a mandatory form that needs to be filled out per game?*  
A. *No, the OSAA does not mandate a form, but highly recommends using the form listed on the OSAA website, under Pitch Smart Resources.*
4. Q. *If a pitcher throws 40 pitches and the game is called because of weather, do those pitches count towards that pitcher's pitch count?*  
A. *Yes, every pitch that is thrown needs to be recorded even if the game is postponed or cancelled. Ultimately, each school is responsible for adhering to the pitch count policy.*
5. Q. *Should the opposing teams get together during/after a contest to confirm/agree with the number of pitches thrown by each pitcher?*  
A. *It is highly recommended that the opposing coaches or their adult representative consult with each other at the end of each inning to make sure the number of pitches thrown are consistent between the two scorebooks.*
6. Q. *Do sub-varsity pitchers need to follow this pitching limitation?*  
A. *Yes, this policy is for all levels. Schools are mandated to enter pitch counts for Varsity pitchers into the OSAA website, through your school account.*

7. Q. *May a pitcher who has reached beyond the 25, 45, 60 or 85 pitch threshold exceed that limit while finishing an at-bat and still be considered within the limit?*
- A. *No, each pitch beyond the 25, 45, 60 or 85 pitch threshold counts and will push the pitcher into the next level. The only time a pitcher is allowed to finish pitching to a batter without it counting is when he/she reach the daily maximum of 110 pitches during an at-bat.*
8. Q. *If a pitcher is throwing during one of the two exceptions; Level Four throwing on day four with a maximum 25 pitch limit or Level Three throwing on day three with a maximum 45 pitch limit and is close to his/her pitch count daily restriction of 25 or 45, can they finish that batter?*
- A. *No, that would be considered a violation. If a pitcher is coming back to throw a day earlier than their required rest days per the exception they cannot surpass the maximum pitch limit for that exception (25 or 45 pitches). The only time a pitcher is allowed to finish pitching to a batter without it counting is when he/she reaches the daily maximum 110 pitches during an at-bat.*