

MLB, MLBPA announce rule changes for 2022 season

New DH Provision Allows Additional Flexibility for Two-Way Players; Temporary Roster Expansion, Extra Innings Rule Resume

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Major League Baseball (MLB) and the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) today jointly announced the rule changes that will be in place for the 2022 Championship Season:

- **Amended Designated Hitter Rule:** With the Designated Hitter in place in both leagues in 2022, the Official Baseball Rules have also been amended to afford additional flexibility to starting pitchers who bat for themselves. Such a player will be considered two separate people for purposes of Rule 5.11(a). If the player is replaced as a starting pitcher, he can continue as the Designated Hitter, and if the Designated Hitter is replaced, he can continue as the starting pitcher (but can no longer bat for himself). Part of new Rule 5.11(b) can be read below:

Starting Pitcher as Designated Hitter. *It is not mandatory that a Club designate a hitter for the pitcher. However, in the event the starting pitcher will bat for himself, the player will be considered two separate people for purposes of Rule 5.11(a). In such cases, the manager should list 10 players on his team's lineup card, and this player should be named twice – once as the starting pitcher and once as the Designated Hitter. Thus, if the starting pitcher is replaced, he can continue as the Designated Hitter, and if the Designated Hitter is replaced, he can continue as the pitcher (but can no longer hit for himself). If the player is simultaneously replaced both as a starting pitcher and Designated Hitter, he cannot be replaced by another two-way player filling both roles as separate people (this can be done only once on the initial lineup card by identifying that the starting pitcher will bat for himself).*

Active Roster Limits:

- From Opening Day (April 7th) through May 1st, the 26-player active Major League roster shall increase to 28 (including 29 players for any doubleheader during this period).
- The limitation on the number of pitchers (13) on the Active Roster and the restriction on position players appearing as pitchers during a game shall not apply from April 7th through May 1st. On May 2nd, the two applicable Major League Rules – 2(b)(2)(A)-(B) and 2(b)(2)(D)(iv), respectively – shall resume.
- Pitchers and two-way players are eligible for placement on the 10-day Injured List prior to May 2nd. Beginning on May 2nd, those players will only be eligible for placement on the 15-day Injured List.
- The required number of days a pitcher or two-way player must remain on option or outright assignment prior to a subsequent recall or re-selection will be 10 days for any option or outright that occurs prior to May 2nd.
- Any optional assignments prior to May 2nd shall not count towards the agreement that limits optional assignments for any player to five.

Extra Innings Rule: In an effort to preserve player health and safety during the condensed schedule, the rule that each extra inning begins with a runner on second base has been restored for the 2022 season, continuing what was in place for the 2020 and 2021 seasons.

- The batter (or a substitute for the batter) who leads off an inning shall continue to be the batter who would lead off the inning in the absence of this extra-innings rule.
- The runner placed on second base at the start of each half-inning shall be the player (or a substitute for such player) in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter. By way of example, if the number five hitter in the batting order is due to lead off the tenth inning, the number four player in the batting order (or a pinch-runner for such player) shall begin the inning on second base. However, if the player in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter is the pitcher, the runner placed on second base at the start of that half-inning may be the player preceding the pitcher in the batting order. Any runner or batter removed from the game for a substitute shall be ineligible to return to the game, as is the case in all circumstances under the OBR.
- For purposes of calculating earned runs, the runner who begins an inning on second base pursuant to this rule shall be deemed to be a runner who has reached second base because of a fielding error, but no error shall be charged to the opposing team or to any player.

Morgan Sword, MLB's Executive Vice President, Baseball Operations, said: "As part of our discussions with the MLBPA regarding the condensed 162-game schedule, we have agreed to extend the extra-innings rule to the 2022 Championship Season and temporarily expand rosters. We are excited to see the universal designated hitter in action this season with amended rules that will promote the use of two-way players going forward."

MLBPA Director of Player Services Kevin Slowey said: "The expansion of the designated hitter and giving two-way players enhanced flexibility to showcase their talents will benefit the game for the foreseeable future. The roster and extra-inning adjustments will also serve to protect the health and safety of players during what will be a unique 2022 season."

In addition, Rookie Qualifications moving forward will remain the same as the 2021 season. Because 2021 was the first full season without significantly expanded September rosters that allowed up to 40 active players, the determination of rookie status no longer excluded September days toward the threshold of 45 days. Like 2021, the Rookie Qualifications will read as follows: "A player shall be considered a rookie unless, during a previous season or seasons, he had (a) exceeded 130 at-bats or 50 innings pitched in the Major Leagues; or (b) accumulated more than 45 days on the active roster of a Major League Club or Clubs during the Championship Season (excluding time on the Injured List)."