

# MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL REGULATIONS

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## 2-6 Pace of Game Procedures

These procedures are designed to improve the “pace” at which games are played by using on-field timers (the “Pitch Timer” or “timer”). There shall be at least one timer in the outfield, and two timers behind home plate between the dugouts.

The Pitch Timer will count down as follows (please see Appendix 1 for a chart setting forth all times for the Pitch Timer):

<u>Circumstance</u>	<u>Starting Time</u>
Inning Break/Pitching Change Timer	2:15*
Between Batters	30 seconds
Between Pitches w/ Runners on Base	<del>19</del> 20 seconds
Between Pitches w/ Bases Empty.	<del>14</del> 15 seconds

\* 2:40 national; 3:10 postseason

In accordance with these Regulations, the pitcher is required to begin the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter (the “motion to pitch”) by the expiration of the Pitch Timer. However, the responsibility to ensure that the pitcher is able to begin the motion to pitch before the Pitch Timer expires is not the sole responsibility of the pitcher – the catcher must be in the catcher’s box with at least ~~ten (10)~~nine (9) seconds left on the timer; and the batter must have both feet in the batter’s box and be alert to the pitcher (*i.e.*, eyes on the pitcher and in a position to quickly assume a hitting stance) by the time the Pitch Timer shows ~~nine (9)~~eight (8) seconds remaining. The failure on behalf of the pitcher, catcher, or batter to comply with these Regulations will subject them to the penalties set forth below in Section A.4 (“Enforcement”).

Except for the first pitch following a inning break or pitching change (*see* Section A.3.b below), the pitcher shall be permitted to begin the motion to pitch once the batter steps into the box and is alert to the pitcher.

There is no timer for the first pitch of the game. Umpires must arrive at home plate for the ground-rules discussion early enough to start the game at the appointed time. A member of the home Club must provide the umpire room attendant with a pre-game timing schedule that includes actual first pitch times for each game. The Pitch Timer will start between the first and second pitches of the game.

**A. Operation of the Pitch Timer.** MLB will hire and assign to each MLB game a Field Timing Coordinator (“FTC”) to operate the Pitch Timer. Consistent with Section C.1 (“Umpire Authority”) below, the Umpires on the field shall remain solely responsible for managing the game, including managing all inning breaks consistent with past practices,

provided that they shall coordinate with the FTC to ensure that the broadcasters shall be afforded the applicable allotted time for inning breaks following close plays involving third outs (whether or not replay review is initiated under Regulation 2-12).

1. **Timer Between Pitches (1920 or 1415 Seconds).** Except for the first pitch of a plate appearance, the Pitch Timer will count down from ~~19~~20 seconds with runners on base or ~~14~~15 seconds with no runners on base.
  - a. *Start of Timer — Pitcher Possession/Catcher & Batter in Home Plate Circle.* After each pitch of a plate appearance in which the ball remains alive and in play, the timer shall start when the pitcher has possession of the ball, the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate, and play is ready to commence (e.g., any runners have returned to their previously occupied bases or left the playing field, if retired).
  - b. *Stop of Timer — Motion to Pitch.* The timer shall stop (blank screen) when the pitcher begins the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter.
  
2. **Timer Between Batters (30 Seconds)**
  - a. *Start of Timer — Conclusion of Last Play.* Unless the prior play results in the third out of an inning, a 30-second timer shall start at the conclusion of the prior play, as indicated by the umpire’s final signal of “safe” or “out”, or in the event the FTC has a clear indication that the play has concluded.

*Note:* In the event that the batter-runner ends an at bat on second base and needs to hand protective equipment to a base coach or bat boy/girl, the timer should start when the batter-runner hands the equipment to the coach or bat boy/girl.
  - b. *Stop of Timer — Motion to Pitch.* The timer shall stop (blank screen) when the pitcher begins the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter.
  
3. **Inning Break/Pitching Change Timer**
  - a. *Start of Timer*
    - i. *Inning Break Timer — Last Out of an Inning.* Upon the conclusion of any play that would otherwise end the inning, the home plate umpire will determine, in the umpire’s sole discretion, whether either manager is considering a replay challenge. If neither manager notifies the home plate umpire that they are considering a challenge upon the conclusion of the play, the ~~Crew Chief~~umpire

will signal the FTC to start the timer and the inning break timer shall begin. On routine outs, and calls not subject to Replay Review (e.g., strikeouts), the FTC shall start the timer to commence the inning break immediately upon the third-out call.

*Note:* No broadcaster should break for commercial until the FTC starts the timer to commence the inning break. Broadcasters shall be afforded the applicable allotted time for all inning breaks for that game.

- ii. *Pitching Change Timer — Reliever Crosses Warning Track.* In the event that a new pitcher is entering the game at the start of an inning or as part of a mid-inning pitching change, the pitching change timer shall reset and/or begin as soon as the relief pitcher crosses the warning track (or otherwise leaves the bullpen area in the case of a bullpen located on the playing field) to enter the game. If the FTC starts the timer for an inning change prior to observing a pitching change, he shall restart the timer when the relief pitcher steps onto the warning track (or leaves the on-field bullpen). if there is less than 2:15 remaining on the timer (in which case the timer shall be reset to 2:15). In the case of a position player entering the game as a pitcher during an inning, the timer shall start upon the first notification of the switch from the Manager or Coach.

*Note:* The pitcher should stop throwing warm-up pitches and immediately leave the bullpen when signaled by the umpire. If the pitcher does not leave the bullpen promptly when signaled, the umpire shall signal for the timer to start.

- b. *Timing of First Pitch / ~~14~~15-Second Broadcast Window.* For the first pitch following an inning break or pitching change, the pitcher may begin the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter as soon as the batter steps into the box and is alert to the pitcher; however, the pitcher cannot begin this motion for the first pitch more than ~~14~~15 seconds prior to the end of an inning break or pitching change to ensure that any appropriate commercial breaks have concluded before the game resumes.

*Note:* The failure of a commercial break to conclude shall not delay a pitcher from beginning the motion for a first pitch, provided that the batter is in the box and alert to the pitcher and the time remaining in the break is ~~14~~15 seconds or less. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the timer is reset in accordance with these Regulations, the pitcher may begin the motion

for the first pitch as soon as the batter steps into the box and is alert to the pitcher.

- c. *Stop of Timer — Motion to Pitch.* The timer shall stop (blank screen) when the pitcher begins the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter.

*Note:* If the umpires initiate a foreign substance check of the pitcher taking the mound, the clock should be paused and resume once the check is complete and the umpire signals for the clock to resume.

4. **Enforcement.** The following penalties shall apply to violations of the Pitch Timer regulations by pitchers, batters, and catchers.

- a. *Pitchers – Automatic Ball.* Pitchers are expected to begin the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter as soon as the batter enters the box and becomes alert to the pitcher. If the pitcher does not begin the motion to deliver the pitch or attempt a pickoff (or other permissible Disengagement under Section B.1 below) before the Pitch Timer expires, the pitcher will be adjudged to have violated the rule and the umpire shall award a ball without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance unless the ball awarded by the umpire is the batter’s fourth ball in which case the batter is entitled to advance to first base under Rule 5.05(b)(1).

*Note:* If after the pitcher has committed to deliver the pitch, and he fails to deliver his pitch, it shall be called a balk (with no runners on it shall be called a ball), unless the batter has caused the pitcher to interrupt his delivery.

- b. *Batters – Automatic Strike.* Batters should not delay entering the batter’s box to gain an undue advantage. If the batter does not enter the box and become alert to the pitcher with ~~nine~~ nine (8) or more seconds remaining on the Pitch Timer, the ball is dead immediately. The batter will be adjudged to have violated the rule and the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. No runners may advance.

*Note:* If in the umpire’s judgment a batter’s actions cause the pitcher to interrupt their delivery, the batter shall be deemed to have requested “time” or stepped out of the box within the meaning of this Regulation. If the batter requests “time” a second time during the same plate appearance, a violation will be assessed on the hitter and the umpire shall call a strike. See Section B.6 (“Batter Requesting ‘Time’”) below. In addition, if the batter steps out of the box with ~~nine~~ nine (8) seconds or less remaining

on the timer without having been granted “time,” the umpire also shall call a strike. In the event the batter requests “time” more than once during the same plate appearance, but the batter remains in the box, the umpire may deny the request without calling a strike.

- c. *Catchers – Automatic Ball.* With an inning break or pitching change timer, the catcher must be in the catcher’s box after a pitcher completes their warm-up pitches with ~~10~~nine (9) or more seconds remaining on the Pitch Timer. For a between-batter or between-pitches timer, the catcher also must be in the catcher’s box with ~~10~~nine (9) or more seconds remaining on the Pitch Timer. If the catcher is not in the catcher’s box in accordance with this Section A.4.c, the defensive team has violated the rule and the umpire shall award a ball without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance, unless the ball awarded by the umpire is the batter’s fourth ball in which case the batter is entitled to advance to first base under Rule 5.05(b)(1).

*Note:* If a catcher leaves the batter’s box to give defensive signals with less than ~~10~~nine (9) seconds remaining on the Pitch Timer, the catcher must request and be granted time by the umpire and the pitcher shall be charged with a Disengagement in accordance with Section B.1.d below.

- d. *Circumvention.* If an umpire judges that a player or coach of the defensive team is intentionally circumventing these Regulations, the umpire shall award a ball. If an umpire judges that a player or coach of the offensive team is intentionally circumventing these Regulations, the umpire shall award a strike. Following the award of such a ball or strike, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance, unless the ball awarded by the umpire is the batter’s fourth ball in which case the batter is entitled to advance to first base under Rule 5.05(b)(1).

Clubs also may be held accountable and subject to discipline by the Commissioner’s Office for the circumvention of the Pitch Timer Regulations by their players and field staff.

## B. Pitch Timer Considerations

1. **Disengagements (Pickoffs and Step Offs).**- If the pitcher makes a pickoff attempt at any base, feints a pickoff, or otherwise steps off the rubber with runners on base he shall be charged with a “Disengagement.” -A Disengagement also may be charged to the pitcher on defensive calls of time, if the catcher leaves the catcher’s box with less than ~~10~~nine (9) seconds remaining on the timer, or if the pitcher asks for new baseballs, under the circumstances and conditions described below. If a pitcher steps off the rubber while the bases are empty the pitcher will

not be charged with a Disengagement; but, unless the umpire grants “time,” a step-off without runners on base shall not restart the Pitch Timer.

a. *Effect on Timer.* - If the pitcher Disengages with at least one runner on base, the Pitch Timer shall stop (blank screen). -Following a Disengagement in which the ball remains alive and the batter remains at bat, the Pitch Timer shall restart to ~~19~~20 seconds (runners on) or ~~14~~15 seconds (bases empty) when the pitcher has possession of the ball, and the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate. Following a feint of a pickoff or a step off with no subsequent attempt on a runner, the ~~19~~20-second Pitch Timer shall restart immediately.

b. *Two Disengagements Permitted—Without Penalty.* To ensure that pitchers do not circumvent the Pitch Timer regulations by stepping off the rubber, pitchers shall be limited to a total of two Disengagements per plate appearance while there is at least one runner on base. ~~A and no runner has advanced for any reason during that plate appearance. If a runner on base advances to another base for any reason during a plate appearance (even in situations in which another runner does not advance), the pitcher’s Disengagement count will be reset (i.e., the pitcher may record three or more will not be considered to have made any prior Disengagements in during the same plate appearance with runners on; provided, however, if the defensive team does not record an out during the ensuing play and all runners safely return to).~~ For the originally occupied bases avoidance of doubt, the result is a balk. The two Disengagement limit count shall not be reset until the following during a plate appearance (e.g., a stolen base for any other reason, including but not limited to, caught stealing, pickoff, balk, pitching change, suspended game, etc., during a plate appearance will not reset the two Disengagement limit).

~~—~~ *Note:* c. Impact of Third or More Disengagement During a Plate Appearance. A pitcher may record three or more Disengagements in the same plate appearance with runners on base, but the defensive team may be penalized as follows depending on the result of the play.

i. All Runners on Base Safely Return to Original Base. If a pitcher ~~steps off the rubber while the~~ records a third or more Disengagement and all runners safely return (or continue to occupy) their originally occupied bases ~~are empty,~~ the pitcher will not be charged with a Disengagement; but, unless the umpire grants “time,” ~~a step-off without runners on base~~ balk.

ii. Defensive Team Records an Out Following Disengagement. If a pitcher records a third or more Disengagement and the defensive

team records at least one out of a runner on base, the pitcher shall not ~~restart the Pitch Timer~~ be charged with a balk.

eiii. *At Least One Runner Advances a Base Following Disengagement.* If a pitcher records a third or more Disengagement, and at least one runner advances a base (even if another runner does not), the pitcher shall not be charged with a balk.

iv. *Reset of Disengagements.* If a pitcher has recorded three or more Disengagements, the Disengagements only will be reset if at least one runner advances (i.e., the same rule as when a pitcher has recorded less than three Disengagements and a runner advances).

d. *Defense Requests for Time.* If the defensive team (i.e., the pitcher, catcher or other defensive player) requests and is granted time by the umpire, a Disengagement shall be assessed to the pitcher. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Disengagement shall not be assessed for a mound visit initiated by the defensive team within the meaning of Rule 5.10(m). See also Section B.2 (“Mound Visits”) below. Further, a Disengagement shall not be assessed if the request for time is prompted by an injury, failure of the Club’s PitchCom system, because a foreign object has entered the playing field (e.g., errant throw from a bullpen, object from the stands, etc.), or if the pitcher steps off to appeal under Rule 5.09(c) (“Appeal Plays”).

de. *Defensive Signals.* The catcher leaving the catcher’s box to give defensive signals will not be counted as a Disengagement by the pitcher, provided the catcher left the catcher’s box before the batter is required to be in the batter’s box and attentive to the pitcher (i.e., with at least ~~10~~nine (9) seconds remaining on the timer). Under these circumstances, the FTC shall determine whether and, if so, how to reset the timer, as follows:

i. If the catcher leaves the catcher’s box to give defensive signals during the 30-second timer between batters or ~~19~~20- or ~~14~~15-second timer between pitches, the timer shall stop (blank screen) and be reset to 1920 seconds (runners on) or 1415 seconds (bases empty) when the catcher starts to return to their position and the pitcher is in possession of the ball. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the FTC should not reset the timer if there are more than 1920 seconds (runners on) or 1415 seconds (bases empty) on the timer when the catcher starts to return to their position and the pitcher is in possession of the ball.

ii. If the catcher leaves the catcher’s box to give defensive signals during a pitching change, but after the final warm-up pitch with

runners on base only, the timer shall stop (blank screen) and be reset to ~~19~~20 seconds when the catcher starts to return to their position and the pitcher is in possession of the ball.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the FTC should not reset the timer if there are more than ~~19~~20 seconds on the timer when the catcher starts to return to their position and the pitcher is in possession of the ball.

- ef.** *Requests for New Baseballs.* A pitcher’s request for a new baseball must come with ~~ten (10)~~nine (9) seconds or more remaining on the Pitch Timer, and such a request will not be counted as a Disengagement. However, requests for a new baseball with less than ~~ten (10)~~nine (9) seconds remaining on the Pitch Timer will be counted as a Disengagement.

*Note:* If the pitcher appropriately requests a new baseball or the umpire requests additional baseballs from the dugout, the clock should be reset if the umpire completes this activity with less than ~~19~~20 seconds (runners on) or ~~14~~15 seconds (bases empty) remaining on the timer. In these instances, the clock should be reset to ~~19~~20 seconds (runners on) or ~~14~~15 seconds (bases empty) when the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the dirt of the pitcher’s mound, and the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate.

## 2. Mound Visits

- a. *30-Second Mound Visit Timer.* The timer will be set to 30 seconds and will begin counting down when the manager or coach has exited the dugout, or when a defensive player leaves their position to confer with the pitcher (including a pitcher leaving the mound to confer with another player), and the umpire has granted time out for a mound visit. *See* Rule 5.10(m)(2). The home plate umpire will proceed to the mound when the timer reaches ~~ten (10)~~nine (9) seconds. Unless the manager or coach signals for a pitching change, the manager or coach must leave the mound when (or before) the timer expires. If the manager or coach has not left the mound or signaled for a pitching change by the time that the timer expires, the home plate umpire shall break up the mound visit and direct the manager or coach to return to the dugout or signal for a pitching change.

*Note:* If a manager or coach joins a mound visit already in progress, the timer will reset if there are at least 20 seconds left on the timer when the manager or coach has exited the dugout.

- b. *No Pitching Change.* In the case where there is no pitching change following a mound visit, the timer shall stop (blank screen) when the



manager or coach leaves the dirt of the pitcher’s mound concluding the visit. *See* Rule 5.10(l). The ~~1920~~-second timer (runners on) or ~~1415~~-second timer (bases empty) shall commence when the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the dirt of the pitcher’s mound, the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate, and play is ready to resume.

- c. *Pitching Change.* In the event a manager or coach signals for a pitching change during the mound visit, the timer will stop, the pitching change timer will begin (*see* Section A.3 above), and the manager or coach may remain on the mound for the entirety of the break.
- d. *Conferences During Inning Break/Pitching Change.* The catcher may confer with the pitcher on the pitcher’s mound during the inning break/pitching change timer without penalty, provided that the catcher returns to the catcher’s box with at least ~~10~~nine (9) seconds remaining on the timer. If the catcher needs additional time to confer with the pitcher during the inning break/pitching change timer, the catcher may request time for the purpose of visiting the pitcher (or prolonging a visit already underway). If the catcher requests time for this purpose, the defensive team will not violate the inning break/pitching change timer but will be assessed a mound visit.
- e. *Injury or Medical Issue.* The mound-visit timer shall not operate when a doctor or trainer accompanies the manager or coach to evaluate a bona fide medical issue.
- f. *Umpire Discretion.* The home plate umpire shall have discretion to grant a brief window of additional time to a manager or coach whose trip to the mound was slowed by a bona fide physical ailment or other special circumstance (*e.g.*, chronic knee pain, respiratory condition, player requiring a translator). In addition, the timer shall not operate when a doctor or trainer accompanies the manager or coach to evaluate a bona fide medical issue.
- g. *Standard Limitations.* Official Baseball Rule 5.10(m) (“Limitation on the Number of Mound Visits Per Game”) shall continue to govern mound visits without a pitching change; provided, however, in the event a team has exhausted its allotment of mound visits before the ninth inning of a game, the team will be permitted an additional mound visit without a pitching change that shall be available in the ninth inning only (i.e., not carried over to extra innings if unused). A manager, coach, or player may not argue with an umpire regarding whether a mound visit occurred, and such conduct will subject the individual to immediate ejection from the game.

3. **Pitch Timer Not Subject to Review.** Application of the Regulations governing the Pitch Timer contained in Regulation 2-6 are not subject to Replay Review under Regulation 2-12.
4. **Dead Balls.** Following an umpire’s call of “time” or if the ball becomes dead, the timer shall stop (blank screen) and be reset to ~~19~~20 seconds (runners on) or ~~14~~15 seconds (bases empty) when the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the dirt of the pitcher’s mound, the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate, all defenders have returned to their positions, any runners have returned to their original bases, and play is ready to resume.
5. **Warm-Up Pitches**
  - a. *Permitted Warm-Up Pitches.* The pitcher may take as many or as few warm-up pitches as desired prior to the conclusion of the inning break or completion of a pitching change but shall begin the motion to deliver the final warm-up pitch with at least 30 seconds remaining in the inning break/pitching change timer. If the final warm-up pitch is not delivered prior to the timer reaching 40 seconds, the umpire shall signal for the last warm-up pitch. Pitchers are not guaranteed eight warm-up pitches.
  - b. *Penalty for Noncompliance:* The umpire shall stop the pitcher from throwing warm-up pitches when 30 seconds remain on the timer unless the umpire determines that special circumstances warrant additional warm-up pitches. If a pitcher disregards an umpire’s directive and attempts additional warm-up pitches with less than 30 seconds remaining on the inning break/pitching change timer, the pitcher has violated these Regulations, and the umpire shall call a ball.
6. **Batter Requesting “Time”~~”~~”**
  - a. *One Request Per Plate Appearance.* During each plate appearance, a batter shall be allowed to request and be granted “time” only once, and such requests must be made orally. If the umpire grants “time,” the batter shall not be permitted further requests during that plate appearance.
  - b. *When “Time” is Called.* When “time” is called the timer shall stop (blank screen) and restart at ~~19~~20 seconds (runners on) or ~~14~~15 seconds (bases empty) when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter returns to the batter’s box. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the umpire may signal for the timer to begin, if, in the umpire’s sole judgment, the batter delays returning to the batter’s box.

- c. *Penalties for Noncompliance.* If the batter requests “time” a second time during the same plate appearance, a violation will be assessed on the hitter and the umpire shall call a strike. In the event the batter requests “time” more than once during the same plate appearance, but the batter remains in the box, the umpire may deny the request without calling a strike. See Section A.4.b above.

**7. On-Field Entertainment / PA Announcements / Batter Walk-Up Music**

- a. *20-Second Rule Between Inning Breaks & Pitching Changes.* All on-field entertainment and public address announcements, including announcing the next batter and playing walk-up music, must be completed with 20 seconds remaining on the timer. All on-field entertainment personnel must be completely off the field, and all field-entry gates closed and secured, by this time. Before every season begins, each Club should ensure that it has carefully timed all between-inning announcements, music and entertainment pieces, including any on-field races or contests, so that they end with no fewer than 20 seconds remaining on the timer.
- b. *Batter Walk-Up Music.* Batter walk-up music should begin at 30 seconds remaining and end with 20 seconds remaining on the timer. The length of batter-walk-up music cannot exceed 10 seconds.
- c. *Rally Music.* Nothing contained in these Regulations is intended to interfere with the ability of the Club to play rally music or other sound effects that are ordinarily played during the course of a game. However, audio between pitches should be limited so that the hitter is not encouraged to leave the batter’s box.
- d. *Extended Inning Breaks.* For inning breaks during which God Bless America or any patriotic song (similar to the National Anthem) is played or for any other extended inning event previously approved by the Office of the Commissioner in which all action in the ballpark stops, the timer will begin at the conclusion of the song, activity, or event. Extended inning events must be approved by the Commissioner’s Office. Advance written notice of any such approved events will be given to the Players Association.
- e. *Enforcement.* Clubs are responsible for ensuring that on-field entertainment and public address announcements, including announcing the next batter and playing walk-up music, comply with these Regulations and do not otherwise interfere with player adherence to the requirements of the Pitch Timer. Each Club’s on-field entertainment, music clips and public announcements will be monitored closely by the Commissioner’s

Office. Clubs that fail to comply with their requirements under this Section 7 will be subject to discipline.

8. **Umpire Duties.** If the umpire exchanges baseballs or performs other administrative tasks (*e.g.*, brushing home plate), the clock should be reset if the umpire completes their tasks with less than ~~1920~~ seconds (runners on) or ~~1415~~ seconds (bases empty) remaining on the timer. In these instances, the clock should be reset to ~~1920~~ or ~~1415~~ seconds when the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the dirt of the pitcher’s mound, the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate, and play is ready to resume.
  
9. **Game Delays.** If there is a delay in normal activities (*e.g.*, injury or other medical emergency, equipment issues, failure of the Club’s PitchCom system, playing field or grounds crew issues, batter gets knocked down or brushed back by a pitch, retired runners are leaving the field, foul ball remains on the field and must be retrieved, umpire activities, manager comes onto field to speak to umpire, *etc.*), the FTC may delay the start of the timer until play is ready to resume, subject always to the umpire’s authority under Section C.1 of these Regulations. If, in the umpire’s sole discretion, the timer began before play was ready to resume, the umpire may waive off and reset the timer. In these circumstances, the umpire should signal for the timer to be reset to ~~1920~~ seconds (runners on) or ~~1415~~ seconds (bases empty) when the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the dirt of the pitcher’s mound, the catcher and the batter are in the dirt circle surrounding home plate, and play is ready to resume.

## C. Operational Issues

1. **Umpire Authority.** Except as explicitly modified herein, nothing contained in these Pace of Game Regulations is intended to modify or otherwise restrict the duties or authority of the umpires to manage the conduct of the game in accordance with the Official Baseball Rules. In this respect, the umpire is responsible for making all decisions on the field and has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these Regulations.

In the umpire’s sole discretion, the umpire may direct the FTC to start, stop, or reset the timer or otherwise overrule or correct the decisions or errors of the FTC regarding when to start, stop, or reset the timer. For example, the umpire may determine, in the umpire’s sole discretion, that a special circumstance applies (*e.g.*, catcher who ended the previous inning on base may have not had sufficient time to put on their equipment in order to comply with these Regulations to begin the following inning, a player may require additional time due to an injury or medical concern, etc.). If, in the umpire’s sole discretion, the umpire determines that the FTC started the timer before play was ready to begin or resume under this or other appropriate conditions, the umpire may waive off and reset the timer. In

such circumstances, the umpire should signal for the timer to be reset to ~~19~~20 seconds (runners on) or ~~14~~15 seconds (bases empty) when play is ready to resume.

The umpire also may determine whether or not to apply the penalties set forth in Section A.4.a-c above if the umpire determines that the FTC did not properly operate the timer under the circumstances.

The decision of the umpires regarding the operation of the Pitch Timer Regulations shall be final and binding on both Clubs. On-field personnel shall be ejected if they argue or otherwise challenge the decisions of the umpires under these Regulations.

2. **Mechanical Failure.** Should the outfield timer(s) or both home plate timers fail, all timers should be turned off and the penalties described herein shall not be assessed; provided, however: (a) if an outfield timer and one of the home plate timers are functional, the pitch timers shall continue to operate in accordance with these Regulations and penalties will be assessed; and (b) if the timers are repaired before the end of the game, the use of the timer will continue at the beginning of the next full inning.
3. **Pinch Hitters.** Public address announcers may not announce a pinch hitter until signaled, but umpires have been instructed to be alert for lead-off pinch hitters in the on-deck circle, in order to have such batters announced on time. Whenever possible, pinch hitters should warm up prior to going to the on-deck circle. If possible, the pinch hitter should be in the on-deck circle while the preceding hitter is at bat.
4. **Warm-Up Catcher.** Each Club must have a backup catcher available between half-innings to warm up the pitcher if the game catcher has not finished putting on the protective equipment when the pitcher is ready to begin throwing warm-up pitches.
5. **Replacement Bats.** Bat boys/girls must have a second bat readily available in the event a hitter breaks a bat, or the bat goes into the stands during play. The bat must be dressed and ready for game use.
6. **Broadcast Lights.** Broadcast lights in broadcast booths must be turned off prior to the end of the break period.
7. **Distribution of Procedures.** The On-Field Operations Department will distribute a copy of these Regulations to each Club’s scoreboard operators and public address announcers.

8. **Batter’s Box Rule.** Any Playing Rules which are otherwise inconsistent with these Pitch Timer regulations, including, *e.g.*, Rule 5.04(b)(4) (“The Batter’s Box Rule”), shall not apply.

Appendix 1

<b><u>Time Remaining</u></b>	<b><u>Required Action</u></b>
2:15 local 2:40 national 3:10 postseason	Inning Break/Pitching Change Timer
30 seconds	Between Batters Timer  Batter walk-up music shall begin  Between Innings/Pitching Change: last warm-up pitch shall be thrown
20 seconds	All stadium PA announcements shall end  PA shall announce the batter  On-field entertainment must be complete and off the field  Batter walk-up music shall stop
<i>RUNNERS ON</i> <del>19</del> <u>20</u> seconds	Runners on Base During Plate Appearance Timer
<i>BASES EMPTY</i> <del>14</del> <u>15</u> seconds	Bases Empty During Plate Appearance Timer
<del>10</del> <u>9</u> seconds	Catcher must be in the catcher's box
<del>9</del> <u>8</u> seconds	Batter must be in the box alert to the pitcher*
0 seconds	Deadline for pitcher to begin the natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter