



# **COYBL RULE BOOK**

**7U – 8U**

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# RULE TYPES

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- COYBL Specific Rules.
- National Federation of High School (NFHS) Rules (when a rule is not addressed specifically within the Age Level and COYBL Specific rules, COYBL defers to NFHS rules).

# COYBL SPECIFIC RULES

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## 1. Game Time Temperature

- The temperature must be at least 40 degrees Fahrenheit at the start of the game (first pitch) and must remain at least at that temperature throughout the entirety of the game.
- Please also consider extreme heat indexes when deciding to play games. Please review info later in this document.

## 2. Game Length

- Regulation games are 6 full innings unless the home team is winning after 5½ innings, at which point the game is officially over.
- There is a 2-hour time limit on all games. If the game is tied at the time limit, the game is to continue until a winner is decided. Division games cannot end in a tie.
  - If the game is tied when the umpire decides to end the game after 4 full innings or if the visiting team has recorded 3 offensive outs in the 4th inning, then the game is to be resumed as it stands with all offensive and defensive stats kept and recorded.
  - This is specifically mandatory for division games; this is not mandatory for non-division games. (Any agreement between head coaches can be made in a safe place after the game has ended as to whether and how the game will be finished for non-division games.)

### 3. Home Plate Meeting

- Any pregame agreement regarding time limits must be agreed upon by both head coaches and the witness of the umpire in charge. Once agreed upon, no exceptions can be made.
- Ground rules of the park and games must be discussed at this meeting.
- During the meeting at the plate, it must be decided who has the official start time of the game and must keep both head coaches and umpires aware of when the time limit is approached.

### 4. Run or Mercy Rules

- 15 runs after 4 innings (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead). 10 runs after 5 innings.

### 5. Playing Rules

- There are 10 players on defense. One player plays the pitching position; one player plays the catching position. Four players play in outfield positions.
- There is a pitching plate 40-foot from the tip of home plate from which the coach must pitch.
- The pitcher must be within 2 feet of either side of the pitcher's plate and cannot be in front of the pitcher's plate prior to the pitch being made. Make a 4-foot diameter circle from the middle of the rubber and the pitcher must have at least one foot inside the circle and must remain behind the pitching rubber until the pitch is thrown.
- Each batter is allowed six pitches or three strikes. If a batter hits a foul ball on the sixth pitch, he or she is allowed to continue batting until he or she either does not make contact with the ball or puts the ball in play.
- In innings 1-5 there will be a 7-run limit, and you may score an unlimited amount of runs in the 6th inning.
- A fair-batted ball hitting a coach pitcher is declared no pitch / do over if the umpire rules that the coach pitcher's contact with the ball was unintentional. If, in the umpire's judgment, a coach pitcher intentionally contacts a batted ball, the batter is out, and no runner can advance.
- Umpires call time after every play and declare the ball dead. When the ball is in possession of a fielder in the infield, all play will stop. – Coaches, during the home plate meeting prior to the game, make sure the Umpire knows this is our league rule. The player does not have to call time. Once the ball is under control and in possession of the ball, it is the Umpires' duty to call time. We do not want a track meet.
- Only one base will be awarded on an overthrow. This is true whether the ball is in the out

of play area or in play area.

- The game is to be played in a manner that is realistic and baseball like. These players are 7& 8 years old, and it does them no good to have the game played like a track meet. Try to play as realistic as possible. It does everyone no good to just run all over the place.
- All teams must roster bat for all games.
- Teams can use either nine or 10 defensive players. One player must be a pitcher, and one player must be a catcher.
- Teams must have a minimum of eight players to start and finish a game but must take an out for the ninth player. When a team has a number less than eight, the game is declared a suspended game and is not rescheduled. The suspended game is then ruled a forfeit by the league director. Umpires have no authority to forfeit a game.
- Because teams are roster batting, there is free substitution on defense. The batting order must remain the same.
- If a player arrives late, he/she can be entered at the end of the lineup if their name appears on the lineup card prior to the start of the game.
- If a player is ejected when roster batting, the vacated spot in the lineup will be considered an out.
- If a player bunts or takes a half-swing, it is a foul ball.
- The catcher must be in the catcher's box.
- No bases awarded for batter hit by pitcher.
- No Infield fly rule
- No base stealing
- No bunting
- No intentional walks
- Runners cannot leave their bases until the pitched ball crosses the front edge of home plate. A runner who leaves early is declared out, and the pitch is declared a no pitch.
- Courtesy runners must be the last batted out and can be for the catcher of the previous inning only.
- Barrel of the bat cannot be any larger than 2 ¾".
- Each team will play everyone within their division twice (2). You may play teams from the other division as non-league games. These non-league games will not count in the division standings.

## 6. Field

- There is a 30-foot safety arc from the back tip of home plate and from the first-base line to the third-base line. Fielders must stay beyond the arc until the ball is hit.
- There is a pitching plate 40 feet from the tip of home plate from which the coach must pitch.
- There is a circle drawn with a 10' diameter with the pitching rubber in the middle. This is a safety area for the player in the pitching position. The defensive player listed as the pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit. If the pitcher leaves the circle early, the play continues.
- After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or accepting a no-pitch and ruling of the play as over.
- If this occurs a second time by the same pitcher, that player is removed from the pitching position for the remainder of that inning.
- If it occurs any time after that by the same player, then he or she is removed from the pitching mound the remainder of the game.

## 7. Official Games Due to Weather or Darkness

- If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the umpire calls the game, it is a regulation game if:
  - 4 full innings have been played, or if the home team has the lead after the visiting team has recorded 3 offensive outs in the 4th inning.
    - NOTE: If the game is tied when the umpire decides to end the game after 4 full innings or if the visiting team has recorded 3 offensive outs in the 4th inning, then the game is to be resumed as it stands with all offensive and defensive stats kept and recorded. This is specifically mandatory for division games. This is not mandatory for non-division games. (An agreement between head coaches can be made in a safe place after the game has ended as to whether and how the game will be finished for non-division games.)
- If play has gone beyond 4 full innings:
  - The final score of the game reverts to the score after the last completed full inning of play after the 4th full inning for the games.
- If play has stopped before 4 full innings:
  - An agreement must be made by the two head coaches in witness of the umpire in charge to resume the game with offensive and defensive stats kept and recorded or to start game over from beginning.
    - If an agreement cannot be reached, then the game is to be resumed from

where it was stopped. NOTE: Please refer to Pitching Rules for pitcher eligibility for a resumed game.

## 8. Courtesy Runners

- Courtesy runners for pitchers and catchers with 2 outs are allowed to help speed up the game. The courtesy runner must be the person that made the last out. The courtesy runner must have helmet ready to go into the game and pinch run.
- Note: It is not mandatory to utilize courtesy runners.

## 9. Footwear

- Rubber spikes are recommended. Metal spikes are prohibited.

## 10. Bats

- COYBL will allow bats that are approved according to the Nations Bat rules, the USSSA bat rule, as well as the USA baseball bat rule.

## 11. Tobacco or Vaper Usage

- There will be no tobacco use in or around the dugout area or on the field of play at any time. Violation of this rule could result in suspension of the violating coach or player.

## 12. Taunting & Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- Taunting or unsportsmanlike conduct of any kind against the other team will not be tolerated. Coaches, players, parents or fans that take part in this type of behavior will be removed immediately from the game and park by the umpires. Note: Each incident will subsequently be handled individually by the COYBL league office.

## 13. Umpires

- Under no circumstance is a relative of a player to officiate a COYBL game. The penalty will be forfeiture of the game by the offending team.
- All Umpires must be licensed and in good standing with OHSAA. It is asked that they register (Free) on the COYBL website. There is a link on the home page for them.
- Use of Non-OHSAA Licensed umpires could result in forfeiture of any and all games and a ban from COYBL for that year.
- Both Teams MUST record the names of the umpire(s) and their OHSAA number prior to the game starting. Failure to do so will result in the game being declared invalid and must be replayed.
- All divisional games for 7U – 8U must have at least one certified COYBL approved umpire.
- Fees for umpires are set based on the agreement from the paying team(s) and the umpire, the COYBL does not make those arrangements. However, as a guideline, an average fee for umpires in Central Ohio for a 6-inning game is \$65/\$70 -each.
- If you are playing a divisional double header, the umpire fees are to be split by both teams. For non-division double headers, the umpire fees are to be determined by the participating teams.

## 14. Team Eligibility

- The league fee includes your National Registration fees for all Sanctioning bodies that the COYBL is affiliated with.
- Team rosters must be on your team page on COYBL.ORG website before your 1st game.
- All teams must submit the above before they will be allowed to start league play. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of any games played.
- Use of an illegal player or a non-roster player will result in forfeiture of any games in which the player participated. At any time during the season, if a league director discovers that an illegal player was used, he can apply a forfeit to the team using the illegal player.
- Coaches must always have a copy of their players birth certificates with them. If you cannot provide your birth certificates when requested, you will forfeit the game.

## 15. Player Eligibility

- All Ages:
  - A player's age on April 30th determines the player's eligible age division for the current season, this includes April 30th.
    - For example: My child is 8 on April 30<sup>th</sup>, he is eligible to play in the 8 & under division.
    - There is a grade exemption - See "COYBL Age Clarification" of this document for the specifics.
- Players may not play for multiple COYBL teams at the same age level except for an organization that has multiple teams in the same age group, for example: an A Team, a B Team and C Team.
  - In these cases, the organizations that have multiple teams may be permitted to pull players from A, B or C teams to fill a roster spot on a team with a player from another team in that organization, so it has enough players to play the scheduled game(s). The spirit of this rule is not to have wholesale changes on the roster to have significant advantages, it's intended to have enough players to play the scheduled game(s). Examples: A Team can pull from B or C Teams; B Team can pull from A or C Teams and C Team can pull from A or B Teams.
- Any player can play "UP" in an older age group for COYBL Play.
- If a player plays for two COYBL teams (must be two different age groups, unless the above applies), that player may only pitch for their primary team. A fill-in player may not pitch for the team using him to fill a roster spot. Any player playing on more than one team must also be on BOTH COYBL ROSTERS to be eligible to play and to be insured. Note: once a player is added to a roster, she/he cannot be changed during the current season of play. Rosters are time stamped when additions are made.
- You can add non-COYBL players at any point in the season.
- Leaving teams:
  - If a player leaves a team for any reason during the current season, he must receive a letter of release from the original team, signed by head coach and the parent of the player and this is to be mailed to the age group director. The original team must also officially drop the player from their roster on the Nations Baseball website before any team is eligible to pick that player up.
  - If a player is released from a team, he may not return to that team for the remainder of the current season.
  - If a player leaves a team by their choice for any reason, all fees due to the team must be paid in full before the player can play for another COYBL team. No Exceptions.

- A player in the 13U or older age groups must be dropped by 6/15 of the current season to be able to be picked up by another team for the current season. **NOTE: ANY PLAYER DROPPED AFTER THE DATE GIVEN FOR THEIR AGE GROUP IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY COYBL GAME FOR THE CURRENT SEASON.**

## 16. Division Standings

- Divisional standings will include the wins and losses of the two games played against each of your divisional opponents.
- **Any divisional game that is tied must be finished. Ties will not be included in the final divisional standings.**
- Any ties in the divisional standings on the final day will be decided by a one game playoff.
- Rainouts or other cancellations must be made up in good faith for divisional play.
  - Note: Divisional play takes priority over non-divisional play, so any rainout or cancellation in division play must be made up before non-division games. Each game is important for the division standings.
- Please remember it is league policy that divisional games take priority over non-divisional games.
- Division games must be made up on the first open date each team has or first date of a non-division game.
- When scheduling division games, you must take into consideration when the other team will end their season.

## 17. League Ending Date

- Official league ending date is listed on the Managers Help Page on the COYBL website.

## 18. Protests

- Judgment calls of Umpires are not eligible for protest.
- Only rule interpretations, age and pitching violations can be under protest.
- Protests must be given to the Umpire before the game is completed. The protesting team must get the Umpire's name and phone number and be submitted along with your protest to the league office.
- Protests must be made to the league office by email within 24 hours.

- A \$100.00 protest fee must be submitted with a written protest within 72 hours to the league office to make the protest official. The \$100.00 protest fee is refunded if the protest is allowed.

## 19. COYBL Full Disclosure Policy

- All complaints against a coach or team must be sent to the league office and your age group league director, and you must copy the coach of the team you are complaining about. If this step is not followed, your complaint will not be addressed until you comply.
- We will compile a list of teams / coaches and umpires that receive complaints and if it is deemed excessive or the issue(s) are severe, you could be banned from play for the next year or longer.

## 20. Ejections

- Coaches ejected from a game must sit out that game and the next game as well.
- Players ejected from a game will sit out the remainder of that game only.
- Coach and Player ejection must be reported to the league office by the head coach within 24 hours.
- A two-game suspension will be levied if the ejection is not reported per above.
- If the ejection is deemed to be severe in nature, further suspensions from the League could result.
- If the person ejected does not leave the field and park area as soon as they are ejected and makes a bigger scene, it will be escalated to a 2-week suspension.
- If there is any physical contact, i.e. Chest bump or push – Suspension for the year or more.
- If there are any punches thrown, it will be a lifetime ban from the league.
- These rules pertain to parents, Umpires, Coaches and other spectators at the game.

## 21. Lightning and Inclement Weather

- **Recognition** - Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:
- **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.
- **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers will be at a heightened level of awareness of the potential danger of lightning.
- **Management**
  - **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
  - **Thirty-minute rule** – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.
- Safety of the players, coaches, parents and spectators are of the utmost importance and there is absolutely no leeway in these rules. No deviations from this rule are permitted and violations will result in suspension from COYBL for the remainder of the year.

# NFHS RULES

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## 1. Default Rule

- When a rule is not addressed specifically within the COYBL Specific Rules, COYBL defers to the Ohio high school rules published by the NFHS. An NFHS rule book can be purchased by calling 614-267-2502.

# COYBL Age Clarification

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- 8U Division Players who turn 9 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 2nd grade. Also, any player turning 10 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.
- 9U Division Players who turn 10 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 3rd grade. Also, any player turning 11 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.
- 10U Division Players who turn 11 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 4th grade. Also, any player turning 12 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.
- 11U Division Players who turn 12 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 5th grade. Also, any player turning 13 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.
- 12U Division Players who turn 13 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 6th grade. Also, any player turning 14 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.
- 13U Division Players who turn 14 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 7th grade. Also, any player turning 15 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.
- 14U Division Players who turn 15 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 8th grade. Also, any player turning 16 prior to May 1 will not be eligible.

# INJURY REDUCTION

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This information is provided to help reduce the risk of injuries; these are not official rules.

## Risk Factors for Injury

### *Overuse and Fatigue*

By far, the biggest risk factor for pitchers is overuse and fatigue. Compared to healthy teammates, adolescent pitchers who undergo elbow or shoulder surgery were 36 times more likely to have routinely pitched with arm fatigue. Pitching mechanics, such as hip- to-shoulder separation and forward trunk tilt, change as players become fatigued.

Numerous studies have shown that pitching too many months, pitching too many innings, pitching too deep into games, violating pitch count recommendations and acute spikes in workload significantly increase the risk of injury. Pitchers should avoid pitching on consecutive days. Follow Pitch Smart guidelines to succeed and stay on the field.

### *Showcase Participation*

A showcase can be a terrific opportunity for young players to demonstrate their skills for college coaches and professional scouts. However, pitching in a showcase during the offseason can be particularly hazardous, especially if a pitcher does not have his arm in proper pitching shape. Pitchers should treat these appearances as they would any other game for purposes of daily, weekly and annual pitch count limits. Furthermore, they should avoid the temptation to overthrow in an attempt to light up the radar gun to make a favorable impression.

### *Throwing curveballs and sliders at a young age*

Young pitchers who throw curveballs and sliders may experience more elbow or shoulder pain. However, field studies have not shown increased risk of elbow or shoulder injury with throwing curveballs. Furthermore, the curveball produces similar or even less force, torque and muscle activity about the elbow and shoulder than the fastball does. Hence, pitchers should learn good fastball mechanics and proper arm slot first before introducing breaking balls.

### *Pitcher-catcher athletes*

At any level, a pitcher should not also be a catcher for his team as the combination of these two positions results in far more throwing than is required at other positions.

Pitchers who also played catcher were three times more likely to suffer a major arm injury than pitchers who did not also play catcher.

### *Velocity*

Injuries are more likely when there is more stress placed on the body. Higher velocity throws place more stress on the shoulder and elbow, and pitchers who throw with greater velocity than other players their age should be particularly careful to follow Pitch Smart guidelines. It is important that all players establish proper mechanics and throwing techniques before trying to increase their velocity.

### *Mound height and pitching distance.*

Youth baseball pitching mounds vary from flat ground to 10-inch-high adult mounds. One study found less stress on the throwing arm when pitching from flat ground, but two other studies found no such difference. Both variations are thus likely acceptable.

Pitching distance is another important consideration. In some community's young players transition directly from 46-foot pitching distance to adult 60.5-foot pitching distance, whereas other communities include leagues with an intermediate distance (such as 50 or 54 feet). Shoulder force increases with pitching distance, so inclusion of intermediate pitching distance leagues while adolescent pitchers work up to the adult distance is preferred.

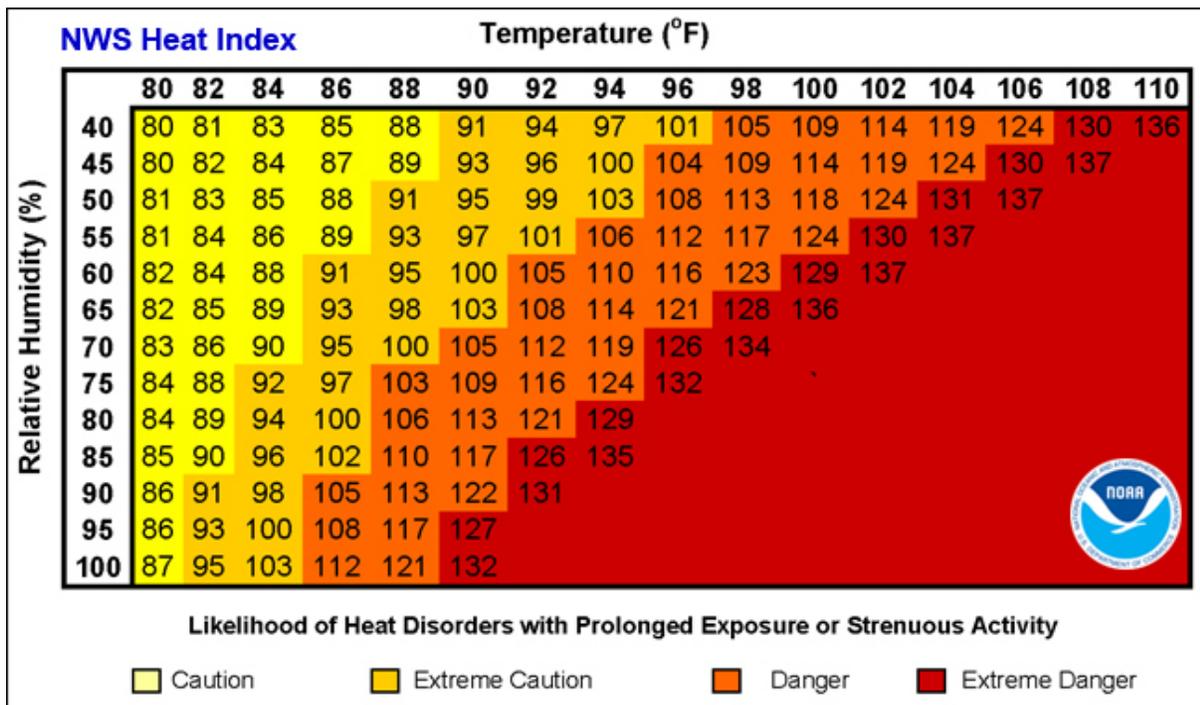
### *Single-sport (baseball) specialization*

Many youth and adolescent players choose not to play any other sports and focus solely on baseball to improve their skills and to make themselves more competitive. However, focusing just on baseball year-round may increase the risk of injury. Several retrospective studies of professional baseball players have demonstrated that those players who specialized in solely baseball prior to high school have higher rates of injury. It is thus recommended that single-sport specialization be delayed at least until high school and preferably until college, although all athletes should maintain baseball-specific strength and conditioning in the offseason, such as maintaining shoulder range of motion as well as the strength and endurance of the muscles within the core and around the shoulder blade.

## Important Heat Index information:

### *What is the heat index?*

"It's not the heat, it's the humidity". That's a partly valid phrase you may have heard in the summer, but it's actually both. The heat index, also known as the apparent temperature, is what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air temperature. This has important considerations for the human body's comfort. When the body gets too hot, it begins to perspire or sweat to cool itself off. If the perspiration is not able to evaporate, the body cannot regulate its temperature. Evaporation is a cooling process. When perspiration is evaporated off the body, it effectively reduces the body's temperature. When the atmospheric moisture content (i.e. relative humidity) is high, the rate of evaporation from the body decreases. In other words, the human body feels warmer in humid conditions. The opposite is true when the relative humidity decreases because the rate of perspiration increases. The body actually feels cooler in arid conditions. There is direct relationship between the air temperature and relative humidity and the heat index, meaning as the air temperature and relative humidity increase (decrease), the heat index increases (decreases).



In order to determine the heat index using the chart above, you need to know the air temperature and the relative humidity. For example, if the air temperature is 100°F and the relative humidity is 55%, the heat index will be 124°F. When the relative humidity is low, the apparent temperature can actually be lower than the air temperature. For example, if the air temperature is 100°F and the relative humidity is 15%, the heat index is 96°F ([use this](#)

[calculator](#)). In the Panhandles, we commonly see hot temperatures during the summer, but the low relative humidity values make it somewhat unusual to see dangerous heat index values (i.e. 103°F or greater). A full heat index chart for a larger range of temperatures and relative humidity values can be found [at this link](#).

It surprises many people to learn that the heat index values in the chart above are for shady locations. If you are exposed to direct sunlight, the heat index value can be increased by up to 15°F. As shown in the table below, heat indices meeting or exceeding 103°F can lead to dangerous heat disorders with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity in the heat.

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Heat Index</b>	<b>Effect on the body</b>
<b>Caution</b>	<b>80°F - 90°F</b>	<b>Fatigue possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity</b>
<b>Extreme Caution</b>	<b>90°F - 103°F</b>	<b>Heat stroke, heat cramps, or heat exhaustion possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity</b>
<b>Danger</b>	<b>103°F - 124°F</b>	<b>Heat cramps or heat exhaustion likely, and heat stroke possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity</b>
<b>Extreme Danger</b>	<b>125°F or higher</b>	<b>Heat stroke highly likely</b>