



**NCAA PLAYING RULES
ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS IN SPORTS FOR WHICH THE NCAA WRITES RULES
UPDATED JANUARY 2025**

Baseball. All music, chants or crowd-cuing messages must stop when the batter enters the dirt circle. Music, noise and cheers, as well as use of the LED/Matrix boards, may be used the following times:

1. Before the start of the game;
2. Between innings;
3. During pitching changes;
4. As the batter is heading towards the batter's box; and
5. After the game.

Audio (music, organists, etc.) may not be played in a manner that may incite spectators to react in a negative fashion to umpires' decisions or to visiting players.

Basketball, Men's. The playing of musical instruments, amplified music, canned music or artificial noisemakers while the game is in progress shall be prohibited, except during timeouts, intermissions and instant replay review by an official.

Basketball, Women's. Artificial noisemakers can be used during timeouts and intermission. Bands/amplified music are permitted to play or be played during any dead ball.

Bowling. Noise caused by artificial noisemakers, such as whistles or air horns, is not permitted in the competition, noncompetition or other designated spectator/crowd areas.

Cross Country/Track and Field. Competitors shall not use or wear artificial noisemakers.

Football. Persons subject to the rules, including bands, shall not create any noise that prohibits a team from hearing its signals. No one in the team area or coaching box may use any artificial sound amplification to communicate with players on the field.

Ice Hockey. Spectators are not permitted to use artificial noisemakers, air horns or electronic amplifiers while the game is in progress. The band(s) shall not be allowed to play while the game is in progress.

Men's Lacrosse. School bands or other organized groups that use artificial means to create noise must be situated in the stands on their respective team's half of the field.

Women's Lacrosse. No reference to artificial noisemakers.

Soccer. It is permissible for bands to play at any time during the game. It is permissible for musical instruments and artificial noisemakers to be used at any time during the game. Artificially amplified or prerecorded music can only be played prior to the game, during intervals between periods, or any time the clock is stopped. If amplified or prerecorded music is played when not permitted, the referee shall direct the game management personnel to ensure compliance.

Softball. Objects used to make noise or amplify sound to show support, approval or opposition to playing action, other than body parts, are considered artificial noisemakers. It is not permissible to use equipment to make noise (e.g., banging on a bench/bucket with equipment, shoes, or hands, banging bats and balls). Spectators shall not use artificial noisemakers, air horns and electronic

amplifiers. The use of artificial noisemakers, musical instruments, air horns and electronic amplifiers by student-athletes and team personnel is prohibited in team areas. Bands, or any component thereof, shall not play while the ball is live. If both teams have a band present, play may only occur immediately before the team's offensive half-inning and/or for about 10 seconds immediately after a score. If only one band is present, play may occur whenever the ball is dead as long as it does not interfere with the public-address announcer. (Rules 5.11 and 5.13)

Swimming. The referee shall prohibit the use of any bells, sirens, horns, or other artificial noisemakers during the meet.

Volleyball. Artificial noisemakers, including whistles, air horns, clackers and inflated sticks may not be used in the playing or spectator areas. Fans are permitted to use nonelectric megaphones for voice amplification. Computerized noisemakers controlled by event management are permissible when the ball is out of play. Cheerleaders may use non-electronic megaphones in a non-disruptive manner. Bands may not play during a rally. Bands, public address announcers and computerized noisemakers should cease playing when the first referee's arm is extended in preparation to authorize the service, and must refrain from performing while the ball is in play. Use of electronic sound systems by event management when the ball is out of play is permissible.

Wrestling. Artificial crowd noise and/or music that is amplified by the host game management may be utilized while wrestling is taking place under the following stipulations:

- a. The host game management must ensure the decibel level does not exceed 85 dB;
- b. Even when the sound level is at or below 85 dB, the referee shall have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise and/or amplified music in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the event;
- c. Live music, including bands, is not allowed while wrestling is taking place and artificial noise, noisemakers or music, by individuals other than the event management staff, is prohibited; and
- d. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions. (Rule 1.4.3)