

Designated Player (DP) / Flex Player (Flex) Rule Explained

What is a Designated Player (DP) and a Flexible Player (Flex)?

Basically, the DP is a player designated to BAT ONLY for one of the 9 starting defensive players, but with some **additional defensive options**. Before the start of the game, you must choose which defensive player you want the DP to bat for. This player becomes the FLEX and plays **DEFENSE ONLY**, but with some **additional offensive options**.

In the past, the DP was called a DH (Designated Hitter) and could ONLY BAT. **NO defensive options**.

The DP gets listed in any one of the 9 batting spots on the starting lineup card. The FLEX player, for whom the DP is batting for, is **ALWAYS listed as the 10th player** at the bottom of the starting lineup card.

The intent of the new rule is to allow the DH-type player to play some defense too and thus get more playing time.

The following is a breakdown of the new rule:

- 1) A DP does not HAVE to be used. You can play the game with 9 starting players on the lineup card. This must be declared on the lineup card presented to the home plate official before the start of the game. You **CANNOT SWITCH** and go to a DP later in the game.
- 2) A team using the DP starts the game with 10 players on the lineup. The DP is to be listed as one of the top 9 players, with the 10th player **ALWAYS** being called the Flex, and must be listed in the 10th spot on the lineup card.
- 3) The DP can just play offense (“BAT” and sit on the bench), or now they can play defense, at any time, for any of the other top 9 players listed on the lineup card without penalty of having left the game for either player. The DP does not have to report to the home plate official that he/she is playing defense for any of the top 9 players on the lineup card.
- 4) **EXAMPLE:** Should the DP decide to play defense one inning for the left fielder, then the left fielder sits on the bench, but continues to bat in his/her normal listed spot on the lineup card, along with the DP batting in his/her normal listed spot on the lineup card. Whenever the DP is playing defense, the player being played for is considered to still be in the game, but “temporarily” on the bench and still has to bat in his/her normal spot.
- 5) The player listed in the 10th position on the lineup card is called the “Flex” Player and plays **DEFENSE ONLY**. The DP and the Flex can be playing defense at the same time; it’s just that the Flex does **NOT** bat. The DP could be playing defense for any of the other top 9 players listed on the lineup card, as mentioned above.
- 6) You can substitute for the DP and/or Flex using the standard substitute and reentry rule with any player on the bench who has officially not been in the game yet. The DP and Flex would then also be subject to the standard reentry rule.

NO.	PLAYER	RE	POS.
19 1	HARRIS		6
SUB.			
17 2	ABLE		4
SUB.			
20 3	THOMAS		8
SUB.			
24 4	JONES		7
SUB.			
15 5	ALEXANDER		3
SUB.			
22 6	MOORE		2
SUB.			
25 7	COOPER		DP
SUB.			
7 8	MORRIS		5
SUB.			
3 9	RODGERS		9
SUB.			
18 10	BROWN (FLEX)		1
SUB.			
NO.	SUBSTITUTES		POS.
10	HOWELL		
4	BAKER		
6	SMITH		
55	GREEN		

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Here's where it can get tricky if you are not careful with your lineup card management and knowledge of the substitute and re-entry rule.

- 7) You can bring the FLEX player into the game to BAT or RUN for the DP if you like. **This is the ONLY player and spot in the lineup card you can allow the FLEX to BAT or RUN for.** Your lineup card now goes from 10 'official' players down to 9 players. You can legally end the game with 9 players in this scenario
- 8) When you bring the FLEX to BAT or RUN for the DP, the DP has now "officially left the game and is subject to the standard reentry rule. BUT the Flex is not, because they are "officially" still in the game. They can also go back to their DEFENSIVE only spot later in the game, and you can bring the starting DP, or a substitute, back into the original DP batting spot. Your lineup card goes back to the 10 "official" players in the game. When you bring the "starting" DP back into the game, they have now reentered once, and if removed again, will be out of the game. If you choose to substitute for the DP and bring them into the game in the DP spot on the lineup card, they have now entered the game for the first time and are subject to the standard substitute reentry rule from there.
- 9) If you choose to bring the DP into the game to play DEFENSE for the FLEX, the FLEX player has now "officially" left the game, and you're down to 9 official players in the game. The game would continue and run as if it were a standard 9-player roster. The DP would continue to BAT in their starting lineup spot.
- 10) A SUBSTITUTE can enter the game for either the DP or the FLEX Player. The SUBSTITUTE can enter on defense, or as a PINCH HITTER or PINCH RUNNER.

REMINDERS

- The DP can NEVER be on defense ONLY.
- The FLEX player can NEVER be on offense ONLY.
- The DP and FLEX player can NEVER be on offense at the same time.
- The DP and the FLEX CAN play defense at the same time.
- The STARTER and the SUBSTITUTE can NOT be in the game at the same time.
- The STARTING DP and FLEX player each have ONE reentry just as any other starting player.