



# SOFTBALL RULES

**SPIRIT OF THE GAME**  
**COMPETITIVE PLAY IS IMPORTANT, BUT NEVER AT THE EXPENSE OF**  
**FOLLOWING THE RULES, RESPECTING OTHER PLAYERS, RESPECTING THE**  
**BAR/FACILITY, AND HAVING FUN!**

## I. GENERAL RULES

- A. **SCHEDULE:** All Games are to be played at the same time, date, and place specified on the schedule.
- B. **ROSTER:** Each team can have as many players as they choose.
- C. **FORFEITS:** Game time is FORFEIT Time. We encourage all players to arrive at the field 10 minutes before the game starts.

At the discretion of the League Ambassador, they may add a 10 minute grace period from the game time in order to avoid a forfeit, but the game clock will start on game time.

### i. Minimum to start the game varies on format size:

Format	Minimum # of Players to Start official game (# of gender minority players to avoid a forfeit)	Maximum number of gender majority players on the field
10 V 10 Mixed	7 (2 gender minority)	7
10 V 10 MEN'S	7	N/A
10 V 10 OPEN	7 (no gender requirement)	N/A

- ii. Forfeits will be scored as a 10 – 0 final match score
- iii. Teams forfeiting more than two league games will not be eligible for the playoffs. Teams forfeiting three or more games will be removed from the schedule. Refunds are not distributed in these instances.



- iv. If you are aware of any dates that will not work for your team, please let your team captain know to put in a schedule request before the start of the season. Team captains can put a schedule request with additional payments through the website
- D. **NO SHOW OFFICIALS:** Teams have a choice to self-officiate or mutually agree upon an official (team member or spectator). Games will not be rescheduled. Game will count as an official game.

**E. ROSTER CHECKS:**

Roster checks will be conducted before the start of each playoff game. Roster checks may be done randomly during the regular season, at the League Ambassador's discretion.

**F. RAIN OUTS:**

Check ASSC's website for possible rainouts. Games will be rescheduled for the end of the season, or as part of a doubleheader on certain league nights. **ASSC reserves the right to shorten the season or move games to other than normal league nights due to excessive cancellations.** [Review the weather policy here.](#)

- G. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** Any player who is deemed to be excessively competitive and/or overly aggressive may be removed from competition at the discretion of an ASSC staff member.

- i. If a player creates unsafe playing conditions where the game cannot be continued, the violating team will be disqualified from the game and it will count as an automatic forfeit.

**1. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS IS A SOCIAL LEAGUE INTENDED FOR FUN!**

**H. RULING CHALLENGES:**

- i. Team captains are allowed to challenge the call made by any official. They should approach the official who made the call and ask them to get a review from the other official. They will have to do this before the next play proceeds. The other official will then make the decision on the ruling which will be the final ruling.

**II. EQUIPMENT**

- Jewelry (including glasses) must be secured in place during ASSC Play. Referees or League Ambassadors may determine that jewelry can be dangerous and ask the player to remove them during or before the game. Any jewelry that is reflective or may have lights must not be worn on the wrists.
- Cleats are allowed, but not required. Metal cleats and Screw-In Cleats are BANNED from ASSC play. Anyone deemed playing with metal or screw-in cleats will be immediately disqualified from the game.
- Games will be played with Slow Pitch Softballs (core .52 300)



## **BATS:**

- Legal bats are as defined by ASA rules. **Bats must have an ASA 2004 (or newer) stamp and not be on the banned bat list. Bats not following these rules may not be used for ASSC play.** This information can be found at [http://usa.asasoftball.com/e/build\\_batlist\\_one\\_page.asp](http://usa.asasoftball.com/e/build_batlist_one_page.asp) The first time a team comes to
- the plate and USE the illegal bat, the batter is considered out. The second time the team uses an illegal bat, the batter is out and ejected with possible league suspension.
- Each individual is responsible for using legal bats.
- ASSC and the umpires reserve the right to disallow a bat should it be thought the bat may have been doctored. If a bat is used and proven to be doctored (i.e. painted over, "corked", shaved, etc.) this will result in the immediate ejection of the person using the bat and the owner of the bat, and the owner/user may possibly be suspended for the remainder of the season or longer, as this is a safety issue. **NO REFUND WILL BE ISSUED.**

## **PITCHING NETS/PROTECTION FOR PITCHERS:**

- If there is a pitching net available in the facility, team captains may request to use this protocol to ensure safety of players. The use of pitching nets must be approved and agreed upon by all parties involved which include: both team captains, league ambassador, umpires, and the facility manager (if available or present).
- For competitive leagues, face masks for pitchers are available.
- Pitches must be HIGH and SLOW pitch for safety!

## **III. FORMAT**

### **A. FIELD SPECIFICATIONS**

The field specifications may change depending on the field location and may vary slightly.

- Mixed Line: Marked off by cones, 190 feet from home base
- IN MIXED LEAGUES: All outfield players on the opposing team must stand behind the mixed line when a gender minority player is batting

### **B. SCORING:**

- When a run is scored it counts as one run whether a gender majority or gender minority player scored it.
- If the game is tied at the end of regulation during the regular season, the game is considered a draw.
- Maximum Score and Home-Run Rules:
  - A team is allowed only 10 runs per inning



- **Last inning no run limit**

- A team is only allowed 3 home-runs per game
  - Any additional home-runs will be considered an OUT

### **C. GAME PLAY TIME AND HALFTIME**

- The game time is indicated on the schedule and the game clock will start at that time
- Incomplete innings are to be played to completion.
- No new innings will start after 53 minutes after the start or after 7 full innings
  - The umpire's watch is the official time
  - If the umpire determines there is a repeated offense of delaying the game by a winning team, he may end the inning within reason to make sure gameplay is fair on both home and away teams
- A game that is called off by the umpire for darkness or other safety reasons after 4 full innings of play or 30 minutes of expired game time, will be considered a completed regulation game
- In the event of a tie score at the end of the 7th inning OR 53rd minute, during the regular season, the game will be recorded as a tie-scored game.

### **D. MERCY:** The mercy rule is in effect when a team is

- 15 runs ahead after 3 innings
- 12 runs after 4 innings
- 10 runs after 5 innings.

### **E. TIMEOUTS**

There are no timeouts in slow-pitch softball. However, each team is allowed two charged conferences per game (IE: Catcher/Fielder/any player goes up to the pitcher after the inning starts). If you request additional charged conferences, the pitcher will have to be removed from the pitching position for the entirety of the game.

## **IV. GAMEPLAY**

### **FIELDING TEAM:**

- The batting order must always stay the same despite any changes made on the field.
- IN MIXED LEAGUES, there must be 3 gender minority players in the outfield at all times. If a team has only 2 gender minority players then they can only field 9 players.
- IN MENS OR OPEN LEAGUES, there is no gender requirements for fielders.
- IN MIXED LEAGUES: When gender minority batters are at the plate, fielders must follow these rules:
  - Infielders must remain on the dirt. Additionally, they must be even with or behind the baseline until the ball is put into play.
    - Baseline is defined as the
      - imaginary line between 1st and 2nd base



- imaginary line between 2nd and 3rd base
  - Outfielders must stay behind the outfield mixed line that is marked with cones and/or field paint, until the ball is put into play.
    - mixed outfield line distances vary, based on the facility. General guidelines are that this line will be 190 ft from home plate.
    - If an outfielder comes inside the line before contact is made and is in any way involved with that play, all runners will be ruled safe.
- The maximum number of infielders is 6 (including Pitcher and Catcher). Outfielders must stay in the grass until contact is made. If an outfielder comes into the infield dirt before contact is made, and is involved in that play, all runners will be ruled safe.
- If an infielder comes inside the baseline or goes into the outfield before contact is made and is in any way involved in the play, all runners will be ruled safe.
- Fielding positions can be changed between players on the field while on defense, however new players may not substitute in except for:
  - A pitching change
  - The team is short fielders
  - An injury substitution

## THE COUNT:

- Batters will start with a one-ball/one-strike count.
- With two strikes, the batter has a courtesy foul. The second foul with two strikes will be called strike three and the batter is out.

## BATTING ORDER:

- **Each team must exchange batting order lineups before the game with opposing teams. This batting order lineup will be determinant of any batting order challenges.**
- If a player plays defense, then they must bat as well
- If a player is in the batting order, they must play on the field at one full inning within the first third innings. (No pure DH)
- IN MIXED LEAGUES, all players may bat but no more than three males can bat in a row.
  - This means there must be a girl for every 3 males. (3 gender minoritys = 9 males max, 4 gender minority players= 12 males max, etc)
  - Otherwise, they will have to take an automatic out at the end of the batting order
    - Ex: Team has 10 gender majority batters and 3 gender minority batters
      - M-M-M-m-M-M-m-M-M-M-m-M-OUT
    - Good Batting order looks like this:
      - (12 people) M-M-M-m-M-M-M-m-M-M-m
- IN MENS AND OPEN LEAGUES, there is no requirement for gender within the batting order.



- There are no substitutions in the batting line-up, with the exception that gender minority players are allowed to re-hit to maintain the proper ratio **only due to In-game INJURY.**
  - **If a team begins the game short (less than the minimum number of gender minority players (3)) gender minority players are not allowed to re-hit, and therefore the result is an out.**
  - If the team has a third gender minority player show up after the game has started, that team may insert that player into the designated spot in the lineup at any time and will no longer have to take an automatic out.
  - All late arriving players may be inserted at any time. Late arrivals must be inserted into the bottom of the batting order, or as close to the bottom to ensure gender rules apply.

### **BATTING OUT OF ORDER:**

- If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is hitting, then the correct batter will assume the ball/strike count of the incorrect batter.
- If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has safely reached base, the incorrect batter will be called out, and all runners will return to their original base.
- The opposing team must make the umpire aware of “batting out of order” before a pitch is thrown to the next batter. If it is not, then the incorrect batter will stay on base.
- If a team starts the game with only three gender minority players and one of them gets hurt, they must play defense with only 9 players. However, when that player’s position in the batting order comes up, they will not be forced to take an out. (RE-HIT) She will NOT be able to re-hit if her current position is already occupying the base.

### **WALKED BATTERS:**

- When the umpire has called four balls, the batter-runner is awarded first base
- **EFFECT:**
  - The ball is dead and runners may not advance unless forced.
  - If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, he may do so by notifying the plate Umpire who will award 1st base to the batter.
  - If two batters are to be walked intentionally, the second intentional walk may not be administered until the first batter reaches first base.
- If the umpire mistakenly allows two walks at one time and the first batter fails to touch first base, no appeal will be honored on the first batter.
- **mixed:**
  - The ball is dead. Any walk to a gender majority batter will result in a two base award, if the next batter is a gender minority.
  - A walk to a gender majority batter with a gender majority batter following will only result in 1 base award.



- **EXCEPTION**
  - WITH TWO OUTS, THE GENDER MINORITY BATTER HAS THE OPTION TO WALK OR BAT.
- Should the gender minority batter-runner pass a gender majority batter-runner when choosing to walk, no out will be called during this dead ball period.
- A gender majority batter-runner advancing to second base without touching first base will be called out if properly appealed.

## HOME-RUN AND GROUND RULE DOUBLES

- Each team will be allowed 3 home runs per game for all leagues. Any ball hit over the fence after the 3rd HR will be declared an out.
- After hitting a homerun over the fence, the batter has to run and touch first base only, but does not have to touch any other base unless they choose to do so.
  - **All runners on base at the time of the homerun have to circle the bases and touch home plate**
- The umpire will declare the home-run boundary before each game on fields without a fence.
  - If the ball goes over the determined boundary in the air, it will be declared a home-run by the umpire
  - If the ball goes beyond the determined boundary after a bounce without contact by a fielder, players may raise both arms in the air (at the moment of it crossing the boundary) and it will be ruled a ground rule double.

## INFIELD FLY

- Infield fly is in effect with less than 2 outs and runners on first and second base or bases loaded.
- Any fly ball hit in or near the infield will result in an automatic out, if the ball is fair.
- Runners may advance at their own risk.

## COURTESY/PINCH RUNNERS

- Courtesy runners are limited to INJURED Players ONLY. If you hit you must run. If a player needs an injury substitute, it must be the last out and same gender. Teams are limited to just one courtesy runner per gender (1 gender majority and 1 gender minority) per inning. The player using courtesy runner MUST be injured, and teams abusing this rule may be penalized with an automatic out.

## SLIDING



- Sliding head first is NOT allowed into the Home Plate.
- For everyone's safety when sliding, cleats need to be faced down.

## OTHER RULINGS

- Any ruling that is not covered in this rulebook will default to the USA Softball Rulebook.

## V. PLAYOFFS

### A. GENERAL INFO

- The playoffs begin the first week after all regular season games have been played.
- MANDATORY ID checks will be done by your League Ambassador before playoff games
  - Rosters are finalized on Weeks 5 (or 6). If there needs to be a substitute or a replacement, please do so before the roster cutoff date.
    - ASSC may make special exceptions under certain circumstances
    - Any teams found playing a non-rostered player will automatically forfeit and be counted as a loss.

### B. SCORING AND GAMEPLAY

- In the event of a tie during the playoffs, there will be extra innings until a winner is determined.
- **ALL PLAYOFF GAMES WILL BE BASED ON NUMBER OF INNINGS, NOT TIME. TEAMS NEED TO PLAY A MINIMUM OF 5 INNINGS FOR PLAYOFFS.**

### C. SEEDING

The top four teams with the best records will advance to the playoff rounds.

- Additional teams may be added to the playoffs for leagues with 13 or more teams.
- Playoff standings are based on 7 games. Some teams may play 8 games to accommodate another team's 7th game. This 8th and final game will not be counted towards overall standing to remain fair to the rest of the teams in the league.
- Tie-breakers will be decided as followed:
  - Total Standing points
  - Point Differential
  - Head to head
  - Coin Toss

