

SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT RULES

1. THE PLAYING FIELD

- A. Bases will be 70 feet.
- B. Umpires will establish ground rules prior to the game regarding out of play areas, permanent obstacles in the field of play, etc.

2. EQUIPMENT

- A. Players shall bring their own glove and may use their own softball bat.
- B. Game balls will be provided.
- C. No metal cleats/spikes.
- D. In order for a bat to be deemed legal it must be an official A.S.A. approved softball bat. It must be free of rough or sharp edges. Baseball bats and fungo bats are illegal.

3. THE GAME

- A. The game will consist of 6 innings or 55 minutes. There will be a 5-run rule per inning. In the playoffs, the last inning shall have no run limits.
- B. No new inning may be started after 55 minutes have elapsed from when the game began. Round robin games may end in a tie. However, if there is a tie at the end of a playoff game, then then the game shall continue as described in these Rules.
- C. During pool games, the choice of first or last bat in the inning shall be decided by a coin toss (home/ visitors) prior to the game. During playoff games, home/visitor will be decided by tournament seed. If both teams has the same seed, then home/visitor will be decided by coin toss.
- D. Base stealing is not allowed. Runners can leave their bases when a pitched ball has reached home plate or is hit. If the batter does not hit the pitch, base runners must return to their bases immediately.
- E. Bunting or chopping down on the ball is not allowed, and will result in a dead ball with the batter being called out.
- F. Players start with a one strike (1-1) count when at bat.
- G. Players will be permitted one "courtesy foul" when the player has two strikes. After which, a foul ball shall be an out.
- H. Infield practice is not allowed after the first inning.
- I. The ball is dead and not in play:
 - 1. When no pitch is declared.
 - 2. When a foul ball is not caught.
 - 3. When a runner is called out for leaving a base too soon.
 - 4. When offensive interference occurs.

5. When a defensive player carries the ball out of play.
- J. The ball is in play:
1. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
 2. When a thrown ball remains in playable territory.
 3. When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.
 4. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
 5. When a thrown ball or fair batted ball strikes an umpire.
 6. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- K. The ball remains alive until the umpire declares time. Time will be called when the ball is held by a player on the infield area and, in the opinion of the umpire, all play has ceased.
- L. A foul ball must reach a height of six feet or more to be legally caught by the catcher for an out, except third strike in which case any foul is an out.
- M. 10 players allowed in the field on defense (the 10th player - "rover" - must be in the outfield)
- N. All players in lineup must bat.
- O. HR Limits: 2+1; 2 HR's per team, then no more than +1 after that; excess HR's are out.
- P. Playoff games cannot end in a tie - in extra innings, teams start with a runner on 2nd, batters receive 1 pitch (either a hit, putout, strikeout, or walk), until a winner is determined. There is no run limit in extra innings. The runner at 2nd shall be the player that recorded the last out in the prior inning.

4. PITCHING

- A. At the beginning of each half-inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five warm up pitches to the catcher or other teammate. One ball will be called on the batter for each pitch thrown over the maximum. No infield or outfield ball is allowed after the first inning.
- B. The pitch must have a minimum arc of 6 ft. from the ground. The maximum allowable arc is 12 ft. from the ground. If the pitch does not meet these requirements, an illegal pitch shall be called. The batter has the option of taking the pitch for an automatic ball or swinging at the pitch. If the pitch is swung at, the illegal pitch is ignored.
- C. The pitcher must pause with at least one foot contacting the rubber prior to pitching the ball. The pitcher's foot must remain in contact with the rubber throughout the delivery.
- D. The pitcher must deliver the ball in a continuous, underhand motion on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- E. If a step is taken it may be forward, backward, or to the side provided the foot stays in contact with the rubber and the step is taken simultaneously with the pitch.

5. BATTING

The batter is out when:

- A. A batter appears in the batter's box with, or is discovered using an altered or illegal bat. Baseball and fungo bats are illegal.
- B. A batter receives his/her third strike. This can be a called strike or from a swing. A foul ball, whether caught or dropped on strike three is also an out, subject to one courtesy foul.
- C. The umpire declares a fair infield fly with base runners on first and second or on first, second, and third with less than two outs. This is called the infield fly rule. The ball remains alive and runners may advance at their own risk.
- D. A fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder, with ordinary effort, with first and second or first, second, and third bases occupied with less than 2 outs. The ball is dead and all runners return to the base they occupied at the time the ball was pitched.
- E. The batter bunts or chops the ball downward. The ball is dead and all runners return to the base they occupied when the ball was pitched.
- F. When any foot touches the ground completely outside the batter's box or if any part of the foot touches the plate and the ball is hit fair or foul.

6. RUNNER AND BATTER-RUNNER

- A. When a base runner must return while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
- B. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one he/she had left illegally after a following runner has scored. The defense must appeal for the out to be granted.
- C. When a defensive player is in possession of the ball a runner may not remain upright and crash into the defender. When sliding, runners must always slide for the base. If considered flagrant in either above case, the runner may be ejected.
- D. Base runners are entitled to advance but accept the liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
 - 1. When the ball is overthrown into fair or foul territory and remains in play.
 - 2. When the ball is batted into fair territory.
 - 3. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- E. Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
 - 1. When a fielder obstructs the base runner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field the batted ball or has the ball ready to touch the base runner.
 - 2. When the ball is in play and is overthrown and goes out of play, all runners advance two bases from where they were when the ball left the thrower's hand.
- F. Obstruction is the act of:

1. A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
 2. A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, or about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a base runner who is legally running the bases.
- G. Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, umpire, or spectator that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Contact is not necessary for interference to be called.
- H. Base Stealing: Base stealing is not allowed. Each base runner may leave his/her base when a pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate, but must return to that base immediately after each pitch not hit by the batter.
- I. The base runner is out when:
1. In running to any base he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between a base and the next base when a defensive player is attempting to tag the runner.
 2. The base runner passes a preceding base runner before that runner has been put out.
 3. The base runner legally overruns first base and makes an attempt to advance to second base and is legally touched while off base.
 4. The base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the umpire's judgment, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play (including shouting or waving the arms to distract the defense), the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
 5. The base runner is struck with a fair batted ball while off base and before it passes an infielder who could have otherwise made a play.
 6. With a base runner on third, the batter or any offensive player interferes with a play being made at home base.
 7. In the umpire's judgment, the base coach at first or third base touches or holds the runner physically to assist a runner in returning to or advancing from the base when a play is being made on him/her.
 8. A runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.
- J. Base runners are not out under the following circumstances:
1. When a base runner runs around the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
 2. When a base runner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the umpire's judgment no other infielder had a chance to play the ball. The ball remains "alive" under this condition.
 3. When a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder.

4. When a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball while in contact with a base.
- K. Injured Runner: If an accident to a batter-runner or base runner prevents him/her from proceeding in the game, a substitute runner will be permitted. If no substitutes are available, the runner will be declared out.
- L. Courtesy Runner: Only one courtesy runner per inning may be used. The courtesy runner will be the last recorded out. If it is the first inning of the game, no courtesy runner may be used until an out is recorded. If the courtesy runner is still on base when his/her turn to bat comes up, the original baserunner can take the place on base with no penalty.

7. PROTESTS

- A. Each team shall designate one team captain who may lodge a protest/complaint with an umpire. No other player may argue, question, or discuss any play or ruling with an umpire.
- B. Remember that children are watching. Set an example for how they should act on a field and interact with an umpire. No foul language. If foul language is used, the player is ejected from that game and any games afterwards and would be asked to leave the premise.

8. Replacement Players

- A. If a team is without ten (10) players at any point in a game, the team is permitted to obtain a replacement for that player from one of the other teams in the tournament. The replacement player may only play outfield or catcher and must hit at the end of the batting order. Multiple replacement players are permitted, if needed.

9. INJURY AND HEALTH DISCLAIMER

- A. **PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THERE IS A RISK OF INJURY IN PARTICIPATION IN DUE TO THE INHERENT NATURE OF THE ACTIVITY. INDIVIDUALS ARE ENCOURAGED TO HAVE A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND TO OBTAIN ADEQUATE HEALTH AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION. INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATE IN AT THEIR OWN RISK!**