

Softball Rules

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Rule 1. The Game, Players, Field, and Equipment

A. The Game

1. Games will consist of 7 innings or 70 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning will begin after 70 minutes of play! (at this time, the game shall continue until the inning is completed or until the home team has a one or more run lead.) If at the end of the inning, the score is tied, the game will continue until the tie is broken. The official will time all games.
2. Occasionally, games will be very lopsided. The game shall be terminated if, after 3 ½ innings or at the end of a subsequent inning, Team A is leading Team B by twelve (12) or more runs. The losing team will have at least four bats, during seven innings or 70 minutes, whichever comes first. Twelve run is in effect until the divisional finals, but not for the divisional finals and Championship games which will be full seven inning games.
3. The IM Supervisor will decide when to stop a contest due to weather. In such a game, 3 ½ innings constitutes a complete game when the home team is ahead.

B. Players

1. Each team will consist of ten (10) players with an unlimited roster.
2. A minimum of nine (9) players per team is necessary to begin a game, unless a player has been removed due to injury.
3. A team that arrives with only 9 players will receive an automatic out in the 10th spot.
 - a. A player who arrives after the game begins must be placed in the 10th spot in the batting order.
4. After being replaced by a substitute, a player may re-enter a game only after two complete innings (12 outs) have been played since they came out.
5. A team starting a game with nine players may add the 10th player to the batting order as soon as he/she arrives. He/She is then eligible to enter the field during a dead ball.

C. The Field and Equipment

1. The Kempsville Rec Fields will be used. There will be foul lines painted on the field and a backstop per field. There will be a batters box that all players must use as well as the pitchers circle. It is mandatory that all players not playing the field stay behind the out-of-bounds lines painted on the field.
2. A ball will be considered out of play if it crosses the out-of-bounds lines. At the point the ball crosses the line, the ball is dead and runners advance the next two bases they haven't touched yet when the ball was thrown. It is not considered out of play if the fielder makes a catch in play and their momentum carries them out of play as long as they make an effort to get back into the field of play.
 - a. A player may attempt to catch a foul ball that is across the out-of-bounds line as long as they are still in-bounds at the time of the catch.
3. If a batted ball goes onto the field of play of an overlapping field, the ball remains in play. Players from the other field are asked not to interfere with the ball, but if this occurs, the batter is awarded a ground rule double.
4. There will be bats and balls provided by the Intramural Department.

Rule 2. Pitching and Batting

- A. The offensive team pitches to their own team. Before each pitch, the pitcher should hold the ball up in their hand and have the defensive team give them a signal when they are ready to play. The pitcher must be one of the team's offensive players which are in the lineup. There will be no warm up pitches during an inning.
 1. Warm-ups are allowed between innings until the defensive team is ready for play.
 2. Each batter gets three pitches in which to hit a fair ball. If after the third pitch a fair ball has not been hit, the batter is declared out.
 3. A batter is automatically out if he/she bunts. The ball is dead and the runners may not advance. The batter must complete a full swing for the hit to be legal. It is considered a bunt any time a batter holds the bat still over the plate and allows the ball to hit the bat, no matter how he/she got the bat into position.
 4. The offensive pitcher does not field the batted ball. If he/she interferes with the ball, another player, or is hit by the batted ball, the batter is out and runners may not advance.
 5. The offensive pitcher must have one foot on the painted rubber on the turf circle when the pitch is released. Otherwise, the batter will be considered out.

- a. The offensive pitcher must start with both feet on the turf circle and end with both feet in contact with the turf circle.
6. The defensive pitcher must start each play and remain in the turf circle with at least one foot until the pitch is released. If the batter does not hit the ball, he/she is awarded first base. If the batter hits the ball and does not reach first base, he/she is awarded first base (similar to obstruction). If the batter hits the ball and reaches at least first base, then no call shall be made.
7. A team may bat as many as 11 players by using an extra player as an additional hitter. The batting order must remain the same. Any 10 of the 11 players may take defensive positions. After the game has started, or if a team has started the game shorthanded, an extra player may not be added. The extra player may bat in any spot in the batting order.

Rule 3. Illegal and Banned Bats

- A. If a batter receives a base hit while using an illegal bat and the following batter plans to use the same bat, the following penalty is enforced. If the use of an illegal bat is noticed before the pitcher delivers a pitch to the next batter, the batter who used the bat and is now on based is ruled out. If the bat was altered, the player is also disqualified from the game. The bat is removed from the game, any runner put out before discovery of the infraction remains out, and all base runners who advanced as a result of the batted ball return to their original bases. The current batter receives no penalty unless a pitch is thrown to him or her. In that case, the current batter is called out (and disqualified if the bat was altered), and the first player who used the illegal bat receives a penalty
- B. If a player enters the batter's box with a banned bat, the player is out and ejected.
- C. If a batter receives a base hit while using a banned bat and is discovered before the next pitch, the batter is out, ejected, and all play is nullified. If discovered after the next pitch, no penalty is enforced. In all circumstances, the banned bat will be removed from the game.
- D. No baseball bats are allowed. If used, the batter will be called "out" when they step into the batters box. If not sure, check with the supervisor on duty. You may also check www.asasoftball.com for approved bats.

Rule 4. Points of Interest

- A. Sliding is strictly prohibited and results in an automatic out. Sliding is in the opinion of the official that the base runner left their feet to avoid being tagged. In this manner, the runner will be out immediately. If a runner over runs a base and is attempting to return back, they can leave their feet to reach for the base, but they will be out if they are running back to the base and leave their feet.
- B. No stealing is allowed. Runners may leave the base when the pitch is hit. He/she shall return to the base as the ball is being returned to the pitcher by the catcher on a pitched ball which is not hit. If the runner is off the base before the pitch crosses the plate, the runner is out and no pitch is declared. NOTE: After a pitched ball, the catcher has the option to pick off any runner who left in anticipation of a hit ball. The catcher is the only person with this option to pick off runners. This is not a force out and the player must be tagged by a baseman.
- C. When a ball hits a base runner, the base runner shall be declared out and the play shall end. The batter shall be awarded first base and all other base runner shall return to their original bases, unless forced by the batter becoming a base runner.
- D. Overthrows out of play are awarded as follows:
 - 1. On an overthrow, the award is 2 bases from the time the ball is released by the defensive player, i.e., if a base runner is one step away from second when the outfielder released the ball, the runner is awarded second and third. This is the same for all base runners and the batter.
 - 2. On a ball which is attempted to be fielded by a player and he/she knocks it out of bounds, the base runners shall be awarded 2 bases from the time that the player hits the ball, not the time it crosses out of play.
- E. There are appeal plays although they must take place before the next pitch. If a team wishes to appeal, they must do so by taking the ball over to the base they are appealing and hold the ball while touching that base. The official will rule on the appeal.
- F. Intramural Sports will not recognize any protests other than those of player eligibility or rule misinterpretations.
- G. If a person is injured, he/she may request a designated runner. The batter must hit the ball and get to first base. Once they get to first base, their designated runner may come in. The designated runner must be signed in member of the team but it cannot be another player already in the lineup.

- H. The Infield Fly rule is in effect and is used when a team has at least runners on 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd with less than two (2) outs and an infielder has a chance to make a routine catch on a fly ball.
- I. Runner Interference and Obstruction are as follows:
 - 1. Runner Interference is when the base runner interferes with a defensive player making an attempt on the ball and they are "out."
 - 2. Obstruction is when a defensive player, not playing the ball, obstructs the progression of the base runner and appropriate bases will be awarded.
- J. The officials will call "time" at the point when the ball is in possession by a defensive player in the infield, and all base runners are still.
- K. All home plate plays must follow the runner interference or obstruction policies. There is no sliding, therefore runners must either get out of the way of the catcher making a play on the ball, or the catcher must get out of the way of the runner if the ball is not in the area. This is all in the judgment of the official.