

Slow-Pitch Softball

Rules

- The Field - The baselines will be 65 feet. The distance from pitcher's mound to home plate will be 50 feet.
- The Players - A team must have 9 players to start or to continue a game with the maximum of 10 players (not including an EP - SEE LAST RULE UNDER BATTING).
- Substitutes - A player is officially in the game when his/her name has been entered on the official score sheet. Once a player leaves the line-up, he/she may re-enter the game. FREE SUBSTITUTION/All teams must turn in batting order. No pinch runners...only in case of injury and that player cannot return to the game.
- The captain is the only player who may address the officials during the game, but only on matters of rules interpretation.

Pitching Regulations

- The pitcher must take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind up. His/Her arm must come to a rest holding the ball in front of his/her body, with a pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. This position shall be held for at least 1 second and not more than 10 seconds. He/She must deliver the ball on the first forward swing to the pitching arm past the hip. There must be no reserve stopping of the forward motion.
- The pitcher shall not deliberately stop, roll, or bounce the ball while in the pitching position in order to prevent the batter from striking it.
- The pitch must be delivered with an arc between six and ten feet.
- "NO PITCH" shall be declared when: 1) The pitcher pitches during a suspension of play, 2) The runner is called out for leaving the base too soon, 3) The pitcher makes a quick return pitch, 4) The ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the windup or backswing, or 5) The pitching arc is lower than 6 feet or higher than 10 feet.
- At the beginning of the game or when a pitcher relieves another, no more than 5 pitches may be used as a warm up. Only 3 pitches will be allowed between innings.

Batting

- Each player of the side at bat shall become a batter in order in which his/her name appears on the scoresheet.
- The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box, or intentionally hindering the catcher while standing within the batter's box.
- Members of a team at bat shall not interfere with a player attempting to field a foul fly ball.
- A strike is called by the umpire for each legally pitched ball hitting the strike zone mat and the batter does not swing, and for each pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter. This includes pitches the umpire has already declared "NO PITCH".
- A ball is called by the umpire for each pitched ball which does not hit the strike zone mat or touches the ground before reaching home plate and is not swung at by the batter, and for each illegally pitched ball.
- A foul tip is a batted ball which goes directly from the bat to the catcher's mitt or hand and is legally caught by the catcher. The batter is not out unless the ball goes above the batter's head before being caught or it is the third strike.
- The batter gives up all rights if he swings at an illegal pitch.

Balls and Strikes

- 4 balls constitute a walk.
- 3 strikes constitutes an out (strike out).
- If the batter has a foul after receiving the second strike, the batter is out.
- Each batter will start with a 1 ball/1 strike count.

Player Conduct

- Anyone involved in a fight will be suspended for the remainder of the softball season and possible further disciplinary action, if necessary.
- Any player ejected from 2 games in the season is suspended for the remainder of the season & possible further disciplinary action, if necessary.
- Any player pushing, shoving, disrespecting, etc. an umpire will be ejected from the game. Refer to the Intramural Recreational Sports Handbook for further penalties.

Definitions

- Base Path - An imaginary line 3' to each side & directly between the bases.
- Batter's Box - An area to which the batter is restricted while in position with the intention of helping his/her team to obtain runs.
- Batter/Baserunner - A player who has finished his/her turn at bat, but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
- Bunt - An ILLEGALLY tapped ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield.
- Fair Ball - Any batted ball which settles on fair territory between home & 1st base or home & 3rd base; or that is on or over fair territory including any part of 1st & 3rd base when traveling to the outfield; or that touches any of the bases; or if it touches any person (player or umpire); or that passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
- Foul Tip - A foul ball which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hand and is legally caught.
- Illegally Caught Ball - Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, glove, or any part of his/her uniform while it is detached from his/her proper place.
- Infield Fly Rule - A fair, hit ball, other than a line drive, that is caught or in the opinion of the umpire could be easily handled by an infielder. Players must be on first and second base (or bases loaded) with less than 2 outs.
- Interference - The act of a defensive player which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball, or the act of an offensive player, which impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play.
- Obstruction - The act of a fielder, while not in possession of the ball or in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of a base runner who is legally running bases.
- Pivot Foot - The foot which the pitcher must keep in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball is delivered.
- Play Ball - Said by the umpire to indicate that play shall begin or resume.
- Sacrifice Fly - A fair fly ball which enables any runner to advance or enables a runner to score, but which results in the batter/runner to be out.
- Turn at Bat - Begins when a player first enters the batter's box and continues until he is out or becomes a baserunner.

Miscellaneous

- Games consist of 7 innings.
- The game will be called at the completion of the 3rd inning if one team is ahead by 20 runs, in the 4th inning if a team is ahead by 15 runs, and in the 5th inning if a team is ahead by 10 runs. If the home team is ahead at the middle of the inning and the above scenarios exist then the game is over.
- There is a 50 minute time limit.
- Bunting and stealing are not permitted.
- Rainouts will be rescheduled at the end of the regular season if possible.
- Each team is responsible for providing a scorekeeper. The home team will keep the official score. The umpire will make the final decision on any discrepancies of the score.
- The catcher is recommended to wear a mask.
- No infield practice will be allowed after the first inning.
- Runners may not leave the base until the ball has been struck by the batter.
- Each runner is allowed one base if a fielder catches a fly ball in fair or foul territory but carries it out of bounds.
- When a ball is ruled out of play, all baserunners will be awarded two bases, the base he/she is running to at the time of the throw and the following base.

Source = <https://web.mst.edu/~ima/rules/Softballrules.html>