

# REC SPORTS SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES Spring 2024

**CURRENT ASA SOFTBALL RULES SHALL GOVERN  
ALL RULES NOT COVERED BY THIS SUPPLEMENT.**

## **RULE 1: DEFINITIONS**

- 1.1 **Appeal Play**. A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a captain or player. The appeal must be made before the next pitch or before the defensive team has left the field.  
Examples of appeal plays may include:  
(1) Missing a base  
(2) Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touch (tagging up)  
(3) Batting out of order; and  
(4) Attempting to advance to second base after making the turn at first base
- 1.2 **Base Path**. A base path is an imaginary line 3 feet on either side of a line between the bases.
- 1.3 **Batter's Box**. The area in which the batter must be standing prior to the pitch and when the ball is hit. The lines are considered as being within the batter's box. Prior to the pitch, the **batter may touch the lines, but no part of the foot may be outside the lines during contact with the ball.**
- 1.4 **Catch**. A catch is a legally caught ball, which occurs when the fielder catches a tossed, pitched, batted, or thrown ball with their hands or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arm(s) or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body, equipment or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand(s) or glove (**the fielder must have control of the ball**).
- 1.5 **Fair Ball**. A fair ball is a batted ball that:  
a. Settles or is touched on or over fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.  
b. Lands or travels past first or third base on or over fair territory.  
c. Is on or over foul territory and touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or an umpire who is in fair territory.  
d. Touches first, second, or third base and then bounces into foul territory.
- 1.6 **Fake Tag**. A **form of obstruction** by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is about to receive the ball, and which impedes the progress of a runner either advancing or

returning to a base. The runner does not have to stop or slide. Merely slowing down when a fake tag is administered would constitute obstruction.

- 1.7 **Foul Ball.** A foul ball is a batted ball that:
- Settles or is touched on or over foul territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
  - Lands or rolls past first or third base on or over foul territory.
  - While on or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or an umpire who is in foul territory, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
  - First falls or is first touched on or over foul territory beyond first or third base.
  - Touches the batter or the bat a second time while the ball is within the batter's box.
  - Immediately rebounds up from the ground or home plate and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.
- 1.8 **Foul Tip.** A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hand(s) and is legally caught by the catcher. A ball that is higher than the batter's head may be caught for an out. If caught on the third strike, a foul tip will result in an out.
- 1.9 **Illegally Batted Ball.** An illegally batted ball occurs when:
- A batter's entire foot is completely outside the lines of the batter's box and on the ground when the batter hits a ball fair or foul.
  - Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when he hits the ball fair or foul.
  - The batter hits the ball with an illegal bat.
- 1.10 **Infield Fly.** An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second bases or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two outs. The infield fly is ruled when the ball reaches the highest point based on the position of the closest infielder, regardless who makes the play. The batter is ruled out.
- 1.11 **Interference.** The act of an offensive player, which impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to make a play. Offensive players must attempt to avoid contacting a defensive player.
- 1.12 **Legal Touch/Tag.** A legal touch occurs when a base runner or batter-runner who is not touching a base is touched by the ball while it is securely held in a fielder's hand(s). The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand(s) of the fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched by the glove or hand(s) holding the ball.
- 1.13 **Obstruction.** Obstruction is the act of:
- A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.

- b. A fielder, (1) not in possession of the ball, (2) not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or (3) not about to receive a thrown ball who impedes the progress of a base runner or a batter-runner who is legally running bases.

**1.14 Out of Play Line.** A dashed line **15 feet** from each foul line. This line stretches infinitely in a vertical plane. Players may NOT lean from in play to catch a ball that crosses over this line. Any balls that cross this plane are immediately dead as determined by the umpire.

**1.15 Overthrow.** An overthrow occurs when a thrown ball from a fielder goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field (dead ball territory) or becomes a **BLOCKED BALL**.  
**See Rule 7.6**

## **RULE 2: FIELD & EQUIPMENT**

2.1 The field dimensions are as follows

Base Paths:	70 feet
Pitching	50 feet

2.2 **Bats:** Bats will be provided by the Rec Sports Program and are ASA certified. Any bat brought by a participant is illegal and may not be used during the game.

**EFFECT: THE BATTER IS OUT WHEN HE/SHE ENTERS THE BATTERS BOX WITH AN ILLEGAL BAT.**

2.3 **Balls.** The Rec Sports Program will provide game balls. The restricted-flight 12-inch ball shall be used in all leagues.

2.4 **Gloves & Mitts.** Teams must provide their own gloves or mitts. All field players are required to wear gloves or mitts, no matter his or her position on the field. **ONLY** Res Hall leagues are provided gloves from the Rec Sports Program.

2.5 **Shoes.** Tennis shoes must be worn. No sandals, Crocs, boat shoes, etc. **Metal cleats are prohibited. Any players caught with metal cleats will immediately be ejected and further subjected to suspension from the Rec Sports Program.**

2.6 **Casts.** Plaster casts or splints made of hard substances may not be worn. Metal braces may be worn if covered by soft material and taped.

2.7 **Clothing.** All players must wear athletic attire. Supervisors will determine whether attire is appropriate.

## **RULE 3: PLAYERS & LEAGUES**

3.1 **Open Division Teams.** An open slow pitch team shall consist of ten (10) players. A team may start or continue a game with less than 10 players, but no less than eight (8). Each team must have a pitcher and a catcher. There are no gender rules. A team that starts a game with less than 10 players may add late arriving players to the end of their line-up. **THE BATTING LINEUP WILL BE AS LONG AS THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS IN THE GAME THAT DAY. SUBSTITUTIONS INTO THE LINEUP WILL NOT BE NECESSARY.**

- 3.2 **CoRec Competitive Team.** A CoRec Competitive Team shall consist of ten (**5:5 ratio of either gender will be allowed**) players. A team may start or continue a game with less than ten (10) players, but must have at least eight to avoid a forfeit. Any of the following combinations of players will be allowed to play: 4:4, 5:3, 5:4, 5:5. Genders must still alternate at-bats. Teams will write the names of their male and female players on the back of the scorecard, and assign them a position in the “male” or “female” batting order.  
**MEN AND WOMEN WILL STILL ALTERNATE, BUT THE MEN’S LINE UP AND WOMEN’S LINE UP IS SEPARATE. THIS ELIMINATES THE NEED TO SUBSTITUTE AT ANY PLACE IN THE BATTING LINEUP.**  
For Example: If a team has 5 men and 3 women, the women will bat more frequently than the men because they will go through their batting line up faster.
- 3.3 **CoRec Recreational Team.** A CoRec Recreational Team shall consist of ten players (**6:4 ratio of either gender will be allowed**). A team may start or continue the game with less than ten (10) players, but must have at least eight (8) to avoid a forfeit. Any of the following combinations of players will be allowed to play: 6:4, 6:3, 6:2, 5:5, 5:4, 5:3, 4:4. Genders must alternate at-bats. Teams will write the names of their male and female players on the back of the scorecard, and assign them a position in the “male” or “female” batting order.  
**MEN AND WOMEN WILL STILL ALTERNATE, BUT THE MEN’S LINE UP AND WOMEN’S LINE UP ARE SEPARATE. THIS ELIMINATES THE NEED TO SUBSTITUTE AT ANY PLACE IN THE BATTING LINEUP.**  
For Example: If a team has 5 men and 3 women, the women will bat more frequently than the men because they will go through their batting line up faster.
- 3.4 **Captains.** Team captains are responsible for ensuring that each player on his/her team complies with Rec Sports eligibility rules (see Rec Sports Eligibility Rules and Sign-Up Procedures). **EFFECT: FORFEITURE OF GAME.**
- 3.5 **Team Roster.** Rosters will be allowed up to 20 players per team. Each player’s full name will be on the team roster. Additions to the roster can be made any time before the individual plays. Additions to the team roster may be made in person at the Rec sports office or online before 4pm the day of the game or 4pm Friday for a weekend game. No additions at the field will be accepted, except during Week One (Pre-season) of play. No additions to the roster may be made after a team has played its last regular season contest.
- 3.6 **Participation Restrictions.** No player may participate on more than one team in any league of slow pitch softball (see Rec Sports Eligibility Rules and Sign-Up Procedures). Therefore, a player may participate on only one Open team and/or one CoRec team. **EFFECT: GAME IS FORFEITED AND VIOLATOR WILL BE SUSPENDED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON.**
- 3.7 **League Restrictions.** The levels of play are OPEN, COREC COMPETITIVE, COREC RECREATIONAL, RES HALL, and GRAD/STAFF/FACULTY. The number of experienced players allowed on the roster for each league is follows in the order listed above: unlimited, five, none, none, and three.

- 3.8 **Pitchers & Catchers.** All teams must field a pitcher and a catcher. If a team is down players and wants the other team to act as a catcher to throw the ball back to the pitcher after every pitch, this is NOT allowed.
- 3.9 **Extra Players.** Team rosters may have up to 20 members. Every player that bats at least once must play defense for at least a full half inning. Captains are responsible for ensuring everyone on their team plays offense and defense.
- 3.10 **Substitutes.** Starters and substitutes may withdraw and re-enter a defensive position any number of times at the beginning of their ½ inning or in the event of an injury. The batting order will not change regardless of the defensive substitutions (**see rule 6.2**)
- 3.11 **Shorthanded Rule.** If a player who has already batted leaves the game before its conclusion, an automatic out will be called every time he/she is supposed to bat. If the number of players on the team falls below eight (8) the game will be declared a default.

#### **RULE 4: THE GAME**

- 4.1 **Home & Visiting Team.** Home and visiting team shall be decided by IM Track and shall be printed on the game sheet. For playoffs, home team shall be the team with the better seed.
- 4.2 **Regulation Game.** A slow pitch softball game shall consist of **six (6) innings or 50 minutes from the scheduled game time**, whichever comes first. The final inning may be concluded after the 50-minute time limit, but no new inning may begin after 50 minutes.
- 4.3 **Balls & Strikes.** Each batter will begin an at-bat with a 0-ball and 1-strike count. Four (4) balls shall constitute a walk. Three (3) strikes is an out. There is not an unlimited number of foul balls. **Foul Out Rule: Once a batter reaches a two (2) strike count, two (2) foul balls will equal the third strike.**
- 4.4 **Hit By Pitch.** If the batter does not attempt to avoid being hit by a pitch and is subsequently hit by the pitch, that pitch will be counted as an out.
- 4.5 **Abbreviated Games.** A game called by the Rec Sports Supervisor due to inclement weather shall be regulation if four or more complete innings have been played, or if the home team is winning after three and a half innings.
- 4.6 **Defaulted Games.** In the event that a team falls below the required (8) minimum players, regardless of the reason, the game will be defaulted. The team that defaults automatically lost. If the defaulting team was already losing the score will remain the same. If the defaulting team was winning, they will lose by one run.
- 4.7 **Extra Innings and Ties.** There WILL be extra innings in regular season play. Regular Season and Playoff games ending in ties will use the International Tie Breaking rule to determine a winner. Using the International Tie Breaking rule, extra innings are played using the following modifications.
  - a. The team at bat places a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> base to begin the ½ inning. The runner on second shall be the person who made the last out of the previous inning.

**b.** The team at bat will begin the ½ inning with 1 out against them; therefore, the defensive team only needs to make two outs to end the inning.

- 4.8 **Forfeits.** A forfeit constitutes (1) non-appearance, (2) less than 8 players on the field at game time, (3) late appearance, and (4) use of an ineligible player. A forfeit will result in a \$20.00 fine being assessed. For students, this fine will be applied to the captain's account at the end of the quarter. If the captain is not a student the \$20.00 fine must be paid within 72 hours of the forfeited contest, or the team will be dropped from further competition. A second forfeit would place the team at risk of being dropped from the league and a second fine of \$20.00 will be assessed. Team captains will be held responsible for payment of the fine.
- 4.9 **Protests.** All discrepancies regarding rule interpretations must be settled on the field immediately (before the next pitch). All questions of player ineligibility should be made from the captain before the game begins.
- 4.10 **Appeal Plays.** All appeals must be made before the next pitch or before the defensive team has left the field.

#### **RULE 5: PITCHING REGULATIONS – SLOW PITCH**

- 5.1 **Legal Pitch.** The pitcher must pause one (1) second prior to pitch, while on the rubber. The ball must be delivered at moderate speed, underhand, below the hip, with a minimum height of six (6) feet and no higher than twelve (12) feet. **The pitcher must have at least one foot in contact with the pitcher's plate throughout the delivery.** The pitcher may step in any direction with his/her foot that is in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- 5.2 **Illegal Pitch.** Any pitch deemed "illegal" by the umpire shall be called a ball. If the batter chooses to swing at an illegal pitch, the result of their swing shall count (i.e. a swing and miss is a strike).
- 5.3 **Strike Zone.** The strike zone is the area which includes home plate and the home plate extension that extends behind the plate. Any legally pitched ball hitting any part of home plate or its extension on the fly shall be a strike.
- 5.4 **Warm-Up.** In between innings, pitchers will not be given any warm-up pitches.
- 5.5 **Intentional Walk.** If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, he may do so by notifying the home plate umpire who shall award the batter first base.

#### **RULE 6: BATTING REGULATIONS**

- 6.1 **Batter must take their position within the batter's box**
- The batter shall not have their foot entirely out of the box when the ball is hit.
  - The batter shall not step into the opposite batter's box once the pitcher is ready to pitch.
  - The batter must take their position in the batter's box within 10 seconds after the umpire calls "play ball."
  - It is illegal for the batter to enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.

- e. There is no restriction regarding the batter changing from one batter's box to the other (regardless of count).

**EFFECT: BATTER IS OUT. BASE RUNNERS MAY NOT ADVANCE.**

6.2 **Batting Order**. The batting lineup should be as long as the number of players present that game. If players come late they must be added at the end of the lineup. Every player must play defense at one point (no designated hitters). **PLAYERS WILL NOT NEED TO SUBSTITUTE IN THE BATTING LINE UP WHEN THEY SUBSTITUTE ON THE FIELD.**

6.3 **Batting Out of Order**. If a player is assumed to have batted out of order, the defensive team has the option to appeal before the next pitch is made.

**EFFECT: IF THE BATTER REACHED THE BASE, THE PLAYER THAT SHOULD HAVE LEGALLY BATTED IS DECLARED OUT, AND THE IMPROPER BATTER'S ADVANCE IS NULLIFIED. THE NEXT BATTER WILL BE THE BATTER THAT FOLLOWED THE PLAYER CALLED OUT FOR FAILING TO BAT. IF THE SITUATION GOES UNDETECTED AND A PITCH IS THROWN, THEN THE APPEAL IS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE AND THE RUNNERS REMAIN WHERE THEY ARE. IF THE SITUATION IS DETECTED WHILE BATTING, THE CORRECT BATTER TAKES HIS/HER PLACE AND LEGALLY ASSUMES ANY BALLS AND STRIKES.**

6.4 **Bunting**. Bunting is illegal. Anyone who intentionally bunts the ball is out. This includes any half swing in which that batter is purposely attempting to hit the ball with a bunt-like result occurring. A non-intentional check swing resulting in a fair ball will not be considered a bunt, and is a live ball if in fair play. It is ultimately the umpire's judgment on a questionable swing.

6.5 **Thrown bats**. If a player throws a bat at any time, both teams are issued a verbal warning. Any thrown bats after the verbal warning will result in the batter being called out. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

## **RULE 7: BASERUNNING**

7.1 **Base runners must touch the bases in legal order.**

- a. When a base runner or batter-runner must return to base(s) while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
- b. When a base runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he/she nor the succeeding runner(s) in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position.

**EFFECT: THE BALL IS IN PLAY, AND THE BASE RUNNERS MAY ADVANCE WITH LIABILITY TO BE CALLED OUT.**

- c. Two base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.  
**EFFECT: THE RUNNER WHO FIRST LEGALLY OCCUPIED THE BASE SHALL BE ENTITLED TO IT UNLESS FORCED TO ADVANCE. THE OTHER BASE RUNNER MAY BE CALLED OUT BY BEING TOUCHED WITH THE BALL.**

- d. Failure of the PRECEDING runner to touch a base or legally tag up on a caught fly ball and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a SUCCEEDING base runner who touches bases in proper order; however if the failure to touch a

base in regular order or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball is the third out of the inning. NO SUCCEEDING runner may score a run.

- e. No runner may return to a missed base or one he had left too soon after a following runner has scored.
- f. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one he had left too soon once he enters his team dugout or bench area.

7.2 **Stealing**. Stealing is illegal. Runners shall not leave the base until the pitch is hit.  
**EFFECT: RUNNER IS OUT.**

7.3 **Sliding**. Sliding into second base or third base is legal. However, sliding into home plate is illegal.  
**EFFECT: RUNNER IS OUT**

7.4 **Runner Interference**. If a runner is hit by a batted ball before it makes contact with a fielder then he/she is called out. The ball is still live and the defense may attempt to put out other base runners.

The base runner cannot interfere with a defensive player attempting to make a play. If there is going to be a close play and there could be a collision, the base runner must avoid the collision by running outside the base path or sliding.

**EFFECT: BASE RUNNER SHALL BE CALLED OUT.**

Note: When a base runner intentionally interferes with a throw or thrown ball, that runner is out. If the umpire decides a runner's interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the immediate succeeding runner is out.

7.5 **Obstruction of Base Runner**. A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, cannot impede the progress of a base runner (i.e.: blocking the base path or faking a tag).  
**EFFECT: IF THE OBSTRUCTED RUNNER IS THE RUNNER BEING PLAYED ON, ALL RUNNERS SHALL BE AWARDED THE BASE THEY WOULD HAVE GOTTEN IF THE OBSTRUCTION HAD NOT OCCURRED.**

7.6 **Overthrows**. Each base runner shall be awarded two bases (the attempted base plus one) when a ball is thrown out of play. The award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the ball left the fielder's hand.

7.7 **Catch and Carry**. If a fielder catches the ball and momentum carries him/her into dead ball territory, each runner shall be awarded one base from the last legally obtained base. The award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the fielder entered dead ball territory, each runner shall be awarded one base from the last legally obtained base at the time the fielder entered dead ball territory. **THIS RULE APPLIES TO ALL BALLS IN PLAY, NOT JUST BATTED BALLS.**

7.8 **Home Plate Extension Rule**. All plays at home are force outs only (catcher cannot tag a runner out at home). When attempting to score, runners can only touch the orange home plate extension. Defensive players must touch the original home plate on all plays at the plate (the white home plate). If a runner touches home plate (not the extension), the defensive team has the option to appeal before the next pitch is thrown.  
**EFFECT: IF THE SITUATION GOES UNDETECTED AND A PITCH IS THROWN, THEN THE APPEAL IS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE AND THE RUN COUNTS. IF**



**THE SITUATION IS DETECTED, THE RUNNER IS CALLED OUT AND THE RUN DOES NOT COUNT.**

Defensive players cannot attempt to tag the baserunner at home. **EFFECT: THE BASERUNNER THAT IS TAGGED AT HOME WILL BE AWARDED THE RUN AND THE OUT WILL NOT COUNT.**

- 7.9 **Commit Line.** A "Commitment Line" will be drawn perpendicular to the third base line, 15 feet down the line from third base toward home plate. Once a runner has touched or crossed the "Commitment Line", he or she has committed to trying to score and may not return to third base. A force play will now be in effect at home plate and the conditions of the previous rule will apply. In the event that the runner returns to third base and does not try to score after having "committed", the runner will be called out once the play is over IF APPEALED TO THE UMPIRE. **EXCEPTION: A RUNNER WHO "COMMITTED", PASSED THE COMMITMENT LINE MAY RETURN TO THIRD BASE, AFTER A CAUGHT FLY BALL OR TO TOUCH A BASE PREVIOUSLY MISSED.**
- 7.10 **Base path.** At no time may a base runner run outside of the 3 foot base path on either side of the line between the bases. **EXCEPTION: IF BASE RUNNER IS AVOIDING INTERFERING WITH A FIELDER MAKING A PLAY ON A HIT OR THROWN BALL. THE BASE RUNNER MUST MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO AVOID INTERFERING WITH THE FIELDER.**

**RULE 8: CoRec MODIFICATIONS:**

(These rules do not apply to Res Hall Leagues)

- 8.1 **165 Foot Arc.** All outfielders must remain behind the 165-foot restraining line until the ball is hit. CoRec teams may have no more than 4 infielders, excluding the pitcher and the catcher. CoRec teams may also have no more than 4 outfielders. **EFFECT: THE BATTER SHALL BE AWARDED 1<sup>ST</sup> BASE AND EACH BASE RUNNER SHALL BE AWARDED ONE BASE.**
- 8.2 **Batting Order.** Men and women must bat alternately. (See Rule 3.2, 3.3) **NOTE: AT NO TIME MAY THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS FOR EITHER SEX EXCEED THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX.**
- 8.3 **Walking Hitters.** Any batter who is walked will be awarded only first (1<sup>st</sup>) base.

**Spring 2024**