

NWRAA ADULT COED SOFTBALL HOUSE RULES

2/17/21, 1/9/22, 2/25/23

The ordinary and basic rules of Adult Softball as prescribed by current USSSA rules will apply regarding batters, batted balls, runners, force outs, tag outs, fly outs, ground balls, running the consecutive bases, and play in the field. The following rules are House Rules that supersede any USSSA Rules for regular league play.

DEFINATION OF TERMS

BUNT is a tapped ball not swung at, but **intentionally** met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield. Bunting **is not** legal; if the batter bunts fair or foul, he/she is declared out and the ball is dead. Batters must take a full swing.

CHOPPED BALL is a batted ball that the batter strikes downward so that it hits the ground either fair or foul, with a deliberate attempt (in the umpire's judgment), and downward chopping motion with the bat. In slow pitch, **this is illegal**; the batter is declared out and ball is dead if the umpire(s) declares that a hit ball is a chopped ball.

COURTESY RUNNER is a substitute runner. A batter must reach first base before a courtesy runner may be substituted. A team at bat may use a courtesy runner once each inning per gender. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out. The courtesy runner may be taken at any time during the inning. If a runner needs a courtesy runner in the first inning of a game, and there are no outs, the substitute runner will be the last batter in the lineup. If a runner needs a courtesy runner in an inning in which no outs have yet been recorded, the substitute runner will be the player who made the last out in the previous inning. If a team goes through the batting order and the player who was replaced in that inning needs a courtesy runner again, he/she may have one. Substitute runner must be of the same gender as the batter-runner.

FAKE TAG is a form of obstruction that impedes the progress of a runner. The runner does not have to stop or slide, only slowdown for a defensive team member's actions to be considered a fake tag. Fake tags on baserunners may result in the award of extra bases and/or ejection of the guilty player at the discretion of the umpire(s).

INFIELD FLY RULE is a fair fly ball that can be caught, in the opinion of the umpire(s), by an infielder with ordinary effort, and when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied with less than two outs.

THE PITCHING DISTANCE shall be 46 feet.

BASE LENGTH shall be 70 feet.

THE STRIKE ZONE: Is an area created by placing a plate extension (template) against the rear of home plate, making a 17-inch by 34-inch rectangle including the plate. A legally pitched ball not struck at, that lands ON OR TOUCHES ANY PART OF the "strike zone" will be ruled a strike by the umpire.

AN APPEAL PLAY is a play in which an umpire(s) cannot decide until requested to do so by a player. The appeal must be made before the pitch, or before the entire defensive team has left the field.

- (a) While the ball is in play, an appeal play may be made by tagging the runner who missed the base, or by tagging the base that was missed. The whole appeal must be stated. Any defensive fielder may state the appeal; or
- (b) Once the ball has been returned to the infield, and time has been called, any fielder (including the pitcher or catcher), with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon. The umpire should acknowledge the appeal and decide on the play. The ball remains dead until the next pitch.

BATTING OUT OF ORDER IS AN APPEAL PLAY:

- (a) If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take his/her place and assume any ball and strike count.
- (b) If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat, and before there has been a pitch to another batter, the player who should have batted is out. Runs scored are cancelled, and baserunners must return to the bases occupied when the incorrect batter took his/her position in the batter's box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the players been put out by ordinary play.
- (c) If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the term at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal, and the next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted, and who have not been called out, have lost their turn at bat until it is reached again in the batting order.

EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

Any player or spectator ejected from a game must leave the immediate area of the facility (out of sight of the game, away from bleachers, dugouts, etc.). That player will receive a minimum one-game suspension from his/her team's next game. The player is not permitted to attend games while on suspension and will be on probation for at least the remainder of the season.

GAME LENGTH

- 1. 6 innings or 65-minute time limit.
 - a. No new inning may be started after 65 minutes from the start of the game clock.

- b. A new inning starts immediately after the third out in the preceding inning is made. Once an inning starts, it must be completed unless the home team is ahead after time has expired and it is their turn at bat (bottom of the inning).
2. Time is not added for injuries.
3. In the event a team has less than eight players present (on the field or in the dugout), the umpire shall permit a GRACE PERIOD, not to exceed five minutes, for such team(s) to field a minimum of eight players. The grace period is part of the playing time. Upon failure to do this, the game shall be forfeited to the other team.
4. **Mercy Rule:** When a team is ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of the 3rd (or two- and one-half innings, if the home team is ahead) or subsequent inning, the game will be stopped and the game awarded to the team with the most runs.
5. Games can end in a tie.
6. Points will be awarded as follows. 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.

PITCHING REGULATIONS

- 1 The pitcher must present the ball prior to delivering the pitch. "Presenting" the ball means to hold the ball in front of the pitcher's body between the knees and shoulders, stopped for at least 1 second; the ball may be in the pitcher's hand or glove and does not need to be visible to the batter.
- 2 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT QUICK-PITCH the batter (pitch the ball before the batter has taken his/her position or is off balance as the result of the previous pitch). PENALTY: The ball is dead; no pitch is declared.
- 3 LEGAL DELIVERY shall be a ball which is delivered to the batter in an underhand motion.
 - a. The release of the ball and the follow-through of the hand must be forward past the straight line of the body.
 - b. The hand shall be below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
 - c. The pitch is completed with a forward swing of the pitching arm.
 - d. The pitcher must have one foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. A step does not have to be made when releasing the ball, but if it is, it must be forward and within the 24-inch width of the pitching plate.
 - e. The pitch must be a continuous motion and delivered on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
 - f. The pitcher may not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
 - g. The ball must arc over the batter's head.
 - h. In the event that an umpire(s) calls an illegal pitch, the umpire(s) declares a Delayed Dead Ball. A ball shall be called on the batter. No baserunners may advance. EXCEPTION: If a batter strikes at any illegal pitch, it shall

be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by the batter.

- 4 A PITCHED BALL NOT STRUCK AT but striking home plate or the template shall be ruled a strike, provided it is a legal pitch.
- 5 Any pitch, swung at or not, that touches the ground before crossing or touching home plate will be declared dead. If any ball touches the ground and is then hit by the batter, the pitch is ruled a strike and the ball is declared dead. If it is the third strike, the batter is out.
- 6 A batter does not get his/her base when struck by a pitched ball.

DEAD BALL SITUATIONS

THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY under the following circumstances:

- 1 When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing while the batter is standing in his/her position, whether the ball is struck at or not.
 - a. NOTE: If the batter swings at a ball and the ball hits his/her hands, the hands on the bat are considered part of the bat and the ball shall be played as a legally hit ball.
- 2 When a pitch is called illegal (Delayed Dead Ball).
 - a. NOTE: If a batter swings at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by a batter.
- 3 When "NO PITCH" is declared.
- 4 When a foul ball is not legally caught.
- 5 When a baserunner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
- 6 After hitting a fair ball, his/her bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his/her bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgment of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play.
- 7 After hitting a ball, he/she intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance.
- 8 When an overthrow is touched intentionally by the person or clothing of a coach.
- 9 When a fair ball strikes a baserunner before passing a fielder.
- 10 When an overthrow enters dead ball territory (including the dugout).
- 11 When a fair batted ball enters dead ball territory.
- 12 If a batted ball is caught and then carried into dead ball territory.
- 13 When the umpire awards an intentional walk to the batter.
- 14 When a batter receives a walk. The ball is dead, and baserunners may advance only if forced.

- 15 When an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly or fair line drive in flight with at least first base occupied and with less than two outs.
- 16 When the umpire(s) calls, "TIME."

In the foregoing cases, the ball shall not be considered in play again until it is held by the pitcher standing in his/her position, and the umpire(s) declares "PLAY."

BATTING

1. All batters will start with a 1-1 count. One ball and one strike.
2. THE BATTING ORDER MUST BE ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE GAMES STARTS.
 - (a) The batting order cannot be interchanged. Players are "locked into" the order listed on the scoresheet.
 - (b) Continuous batter order will be used all players attending will be in the batting line-up.
 - (c) Late arriving players must check in with the umpire when they arrive and may be added to end of the batting order.
 - (d) A team may start a game with eight players. If the line-up drops to seven players, the game is forfeited to the opposing team.
 - (e) If a player leaves the game, the game will continue unless the line-up drops to seven players; no out is recorded the next time the vacated position comes up in the order.
3. THE BATTER shall not *intentionally* strike ball a second time, strike it with a thrown bat, or deflect its course in any way while running to first base. NOTE: Penalty the ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.
4. A STRIKE IS CALLED by the umpire:
 - (a) for each ball legally pitched at moderate speed that arcs over the batter's head, strikes home plate, or the template.
 - (b) for each legally pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.
 - (c) for each foul hit not caught on the fly.
 - (d) for each pitched ball at which the batter strikes at but misses and which touches any part of his/her person.
 - (e) for each foul tip held by the catcher. On a foul tip, the ball is dead, a strike is called on the batter, and the baserunners may not advance.
 - (f) for each legally pitched ball that the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by and which the umpire judges would have struck home plate or the template.
5. A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:

- (a) For each pitched ball which touches the ground before touching home plate or the home plate extension (template), and which is not swung at by the batter.
 - (b) For illegally pitched ball not swung at by the batter.
6. THE BATTER IS OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:
- a) After he/she has three strikes.
 - b) When the batter hits a second foul ball after he/she has a two-strike count.
NOTE: The ball is live, runners may tag up.
 - c) When in the judgment of the umpire, the batter dangerously throws the bat.
 - d) When batter makes contact on less than a full swing. Chopped at the pitch or bunts.
 - e) When he/she attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him/her.
 - f) When his/her fair ball touches him/her before touching a fielder.
 - g) When, after hitting a fair ball, he/she intentionally or accidentally strikes the ball a second time in fair territory. If this occurs the ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.
 - i. Note: If the batter-runner drops his/her bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is live and in play and the batter is not out.
7. THE BATTER BECOMES A RUNNER AND IS PERMITTED TO ADVANCE TO FIRST BASE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT
- a) Four balls have been called by the umpire.
 - i. A male batter hitting prior to a female, who is walked on four consecutive balls with no strikes thrown during his time at bat shall be awarded 2nd base. Base runners advance only if forced to vacate their bases.
 - b) An intentional walk is requested by the defensive team pitcher. Once the umpire has awarded first base to the batter, no one may withdraw the request.
 - i. A male batter hitting prior to a female shall be awarded 2nd base. Base runners advance only if forced to vacate their bases.

BASERUNNING

1. The batter becomes a runner after he/she hits a fair ball.
2. When a baserunner must return while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
3. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
NOTE: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it; the other baserunner may be put out by being tagged.
4. A baserunner must maintain contact with the base he/she is legally entitled to occupy until the ball is hit. Penalty for leaving a base early is an out. ("No Pitch" shall be called and the ball is dead)

5. A runner may advance only on a hit ball.
6. A COURTESY RUNNER may be used by the team at bat once per each inning per gender.
7. Runner must touch home plate. The template is only used for determining balls and strikes.

Interference: It is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid contact with the ball and/or defensive player and not interfere in any way with the completion of the play. Contact is not always necessary for interference to occur.

DEFENSE

1. A team must have a minimum of 2 females on the defensive field.
2. Fielders may assume any position regardless of gender.
3. Normal infield positions only. A maximum of 5 fielders not including the catcher.
4. Prior to the bat contacting the ball, all outfielders.
must be positioned at a minimum of 160 feet from home plate.
PENALTY: dead ball will be called; the batter and all baserunners will be awarded one base.