

NSBF's Co-ed Sports Slow-Pitch Softball Rules

I. The Playing Field

1A. Umpire will designate a field suitable for play in accordance with the following provisions which equal the dimensions of a softball field:

a. The softball diamond is a square with equal sides of 60-70 feet (some variation at different fields);

b. The pitching strip is in the center of the diamond, 46-50 feet (some variation at different fields) or just over 15 paces from home plate, and directly aligned with the first base/third base diagonal.

II. Equipment/Attire

2A. Athletic shoes are required. **Metal cleats are not allowed.**

2B. Players may wear protective equipment providing it does not offer the wearer an unfair performance advantage.

2C. Each team shall furnish all team equipment necessary for each game.

2D. ONLY NSBF approved balls will be allowed for Games. The home team will provide game balls.

2F. Players must wear own jerseys

III. Officials

3A. Games must be officiated by at least one umpire. Officials govern all game play and issue all final rulings.

3B. Umpires have jurisdiction over play and may call off a game due to darkness, rain or other cause at the umpire's discretion.

IV. Player Eligibility

4A. All participants must be registered on a team affiliated to the NSBF.

4B. All participants must be on the team roster.

V. Team Rosters

5A. Each team roster must consist of a minimum of 8 and no more than 16 players.

5B. Each team shall have one Captain, the captain will be responsible for the team.

The Team Captains must ensure that:

a. All team players must bat in the same order.

b. Only the Captain may request a conference with the umpire to dispute calls.

VI. LINE-UPS / GAME TIME

6A. The second team named on the schedule (after the at) designates the home team that will occupy the 1st base bench.

6B. Line-ups: Teams must field at least eight players and no more than ten. Everyone on the roster must bat. Teams can field 10 players (minimum 2 females), 9 players (minimum 2 females), or 8 players (minimum 2 females). If the minimum of 2 females is not met, females must be borrowed from another team.

6C. Batting Order: Teams must field at least eight (8) players and no more than ten (10). Everyone present at the game may bat as long as no more than 4 males bat in a row (i.e. 4 males, 1 female, 4 males, 1 female, etc. or vice versa).

6D. All team players must bat in the same order each time through the line-up. If substitutions must be made offensively when batting all present players would violate the batting order rules, players may only re-enter in the same spot in the order.

6E. A team having eight (8) players present at game time prior to the first pitch must begin play immediately or the umpire, after a two-minute fair warning, will forfeit the game. Teams may start with 8 players (minimum 1 female) without charged out penalties for missing players. Teams having 8 players with no females can still play but must take outs for the missing 2 females.

6F. The game time is indicated on the schedule. Incomplete innings and tie-games are to be played to completion; otherwise no new innings shall be started after 55 minutes of playing time. The umpires watch shall be the official time. Teams may ask the umpire the start time.

EXCEPTION: If both captains agree, game may be started before scheduled game time.

6G. Mercy Rule: If five (5) innings have been played (4 ½ if the home team is ahead) and one team is leading by ten (10) runs or more, the game shall be called; also 15 runs after 4 innings, and 20 runs after 3 innings.

6H. A team failing to place at least eight (8) eligible players on the field at game time will forfeit the game. Late players may enter the game at the bottom of the line-up as long as batting order rules are still followed.

6I. All batters shall assume a one-ball, one-strike count when beginning their at-bat.

XII. Defensive Positions

7A. Males and females do not have to alternate defensively in the infield, outfield, or at pitcher/catcher. However, there must be at least one (1) female in the outfield and at least one (1) female in the infield if playing with only 2 females. (pitcher and catcher count as infield regarding this rule). If playing with 3 or more females, they can be placed wherever on the field.

7B. All infielders must remain in the infield and all outfielders must remain in the outfield until the ball is hit.

VIII. Outfield Line

A line is marked across the outfield in an arc 150 feet (45.72 meters) from home plate. When a female is batting, all outfielders have to stand behind this line until the ball is hit. This is designed to make sure that outfielders don't play too close when women bat, because when they do, women have almost no space between the infielders and outfielders in which to get base hits.

IX. Substitutions

8A. A female may only substitute for a female in the batting order, a male for a male.

8B. Teams may substitute freely on defense each inning.

X. Regulation Games

9A. Regulation games last 7 full innings or 55 minutes (see rule 6F) whichever comes first.

9B. A game that is called off by the umpire for darkness or other safety reason after 4 full innings of play shall be considered a regulation game. The game score at end of the last full inning shall determine the winner.

9C. In the event of a tie score at the end of the 7th inning or 55 minutes (whichever comes first), extra full innings shall commence until a winner is determined. In the event a game goes into extra innings, each team will begin their half inning with a runner on second. This runner must be the last person who batted in the prior inning.

9D. A team Captain may raise protest with the umpire for blatant rule infraction but will accept the umpires final ruling.

XI. Running

10A. Runners must stay within the base line unless avoiding interference with a fielder making a play on a batted ball. Fielders must stay out of the base line if not making a play on a batted ball. Fielders trying to make an out on base may have their foot on base, but must lean out of the baseline. Runners hindered by any fielder within the base line illegally shall be safe at the base to which they were running. Runners who interfere with a fielder making a play on a batted ball will be ruled out.

10B. Leading off base and stealing are not allowed. A runner off his/her base when the ball is pitched is out.

10C. After a batted ball is caught, runners must tag their original base before running to the next base. Runners may overrun first base only.

10D. In the case of a batter hitting an over-the-fence home run, drawing a walk, or advancing freely on a teammates over-the-fence home run or walk, all bases must be touched in order. If not, the opposing team may appeal to the umpire that the player missed a base and the player will be declared out. If that player scored on the play, that players run will not count. If that is the third out of the inning, all other runs scored by players touching all bases in order will still count.

10E. No blocking the plate (runner gets priority)

XII. Fouls

11A. A foul ball counts as a strike.

11B. A foul ball on the third strike is an out. One courtesy foul will be given. Second foul on strike 3 will be considered a strike out.

XIII. Outs

12A. A count of three outs by a team completes the teams half of the inning.

12B. An out is:

1. A runner tagged by the ball in fielder's hand or glove at ANY time while not on base;
2. Any batted ball (fair or foul) that is caught;
3. A fielder catching the ball with their foot on the base to which a runner is forced to run.
4. A runner off of his/her base when the ball is pitched.
5. A ball hit when the batter steps out of the batters box.
6. An intentionally bunted ball.

7. Running out of the base line to avoid a tag
8. Interfering with a fielder making a play on a batted ball, whether intentional or unintentional, as well as intentionally interfering with a defensive player at any time.

XIV. Ball in Play

13A. Ball is in play until the umpire declares the play is dead and will call time.

XV. Designated Runner/Player Positions

14A. In cases of injury or illness, a time-out may be requested for participant removal and replacement with a substitute of the same sex. If the participant later returns to play, the participant must be inserted in the same batting order position previously held.

14B. If a player is ejected, injured, or becomes ill and cannot continue, and a substitute is not available, the lineup will continue in the same formation, less the removed player (see rule 6C for applicable penalties).

14C. The pitcher may be replaced on the mound once per inning.

XVI. League Standings

15A. League standings shall be the basis of tournament seeds. Ties in the league standings shall be broken by 1) games won in head to head, 2) run differential in head to head, 3) run differential in overall games.