

## **SOFTBALL RULES**

*All games will be governed by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Slow Pitch Softball Rules with the following Texas A&M Intramural Sports modifications:*

### **PLAYERS & EQUIPMENT**

1. Each participant must present a current Texas A&M student ID card or a Rec Membership ID card in order to be eligible to participate. Failure to do so will prevent an individual from playing until the ID card is presented.
2. Each Men's and Women's team shall consist of 10 players. Each team must have a minimum of 8 players in order to begin a game. Any team that begins a game with 8 or 9 players may add players to the bottom of its line-up (to a limit of 10 batters). **There will be no ghost outs recorded for a team that starts a game with 8 or 9 players.**
3. **Additional Hitter:** Each Men's and Women's team may bat a maximum of 11 players by using an additional Hitter (AH). An AH is optional. The AH must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game. All 11 players listed in the batting order must bat and any 10 may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed, but the batting order must remain the same. The AH may be substituted for at any time, however, the substitute must be a player who has not yet been in the game.
4. **Substitutions:** All substitutes must notify the Home Plate Umpire and the Scorekeeper upon entering the game. We will permit unlimited substitution (the player must bat in the same position in the line-up at which he/she started the game). The starting player and his substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time.
5. **Balls:** All games shall use a regulation ASA approved 52 Core 300 compression 12-inch softballs. Intramurals will provide all game balls. However, you must bring your own to warm-up with.
6. **Bats:** Participants are **ALLOWED TO USE ANY ASA OR USSSA NEW STAMPED BAT**. The intramural department still has the right to determine if a bat is not eligible to be used.
7. **Banned Bats:** If a player enters the batter's box with a banned bat, the player is out and ejected. 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. **The player ejected will be counted as a ghost out in the line-up if no substitutions is not available that is not already currently in the line-up.**
8. **Illegal Bats:** 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 base is ruled out. If the bat is illegal the player is also disqualified from the game. The bat is removed from the game, any runner put out before discovery of the infractions 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 no penalty. **The player ejected will be counted as a ghost out in the line-up if no substitutions is not available that is not already currently in the line-up.**

9. **Shoes:** Regulation rubber-soled cleats, plastic cleats, detachable rubber cleats that screw into the shoe, and tennis shoes are the only permissible footwear. Sandals, street shoes, hiking boots, combat boots, or metal spikes are not allowed. No player will be allowed to participate in bare feet. **Any player seen wearing metal spikes after the first pitch of the game will be ejected.**
10. **Jewelry:** Participants are not permitted to wear any visible jewelry. The Department of Recreational Sports WILL NOT provide band-aids or athletic tape to cover jewelry items.
11. **Extra Equipment:** Players may wear soft, pliable pads or braces on the leg, knee, or ankle. Braces made of any hard material must be covered with at least ¼ inch padding for safety reasons. Under no circumstances will a player wearing a hard cast or splint be permitted to play.
12. **Catchers are required to wear a catcher's mask!** Masks will be provided by IM's.

### **GAME FORMAT**

1. A game will consist of seven (7) innings or 50 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning will begin once the 50-minute time limit has expired. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. Championship games will not have a time limit.
2. **Forfeit:** A team must have the minimum number of players to start a game. Teams not ready to play at the scheduled starting time shall be penalized one run for every minute the game is delayed. Teams not ready to play at ten minutes after the scheduled starting time shall forfeit. "Ready to play" includes having the scorecard filled out and IDs checked. The game clock begins after the captains meeting.
3. **Extra Innings:** In the event that the score remains tied after 7 complete innings or 50 minutes, one extra inning will be played. The offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who completed the last at-bat in the previous inning placed as a runner on second base. If the game is still tied after the one extra inning, the contest will end as a tie. In the playoffs, extra innings will extend until a winner has been decided.
4. **Run Rule:** If a team is ahead by 15 runs after 4 complete innings (3 1/2 if the home team is ahead), or 10 runs after 5 innings (4 1/2 if the home team is ahead), then the game will be considered complete. The run rule will apply to all games including championship games.
5. **Called Games:** In the event of inclement weather or power failure of more than 15 minutes, the following will constitute a complete game:
  - A. Four innings have been completed (3 1/2 if the home team is leading).
  - B. The game has reached at least one-half hour in elapsed time.If the game is called due to weather before the time limit (30 minutes) or inning limit (4 innings) has elapsed, then the game will be replayed from the exact point where play was stopped. Teams must keep the same batting order. If play stops due to inclement weather, the final decision will be made by the Sport Supervisor.

## RULES OF PLAY

1. **The pitch must be thrown at a continuous moderate speed and must arc at least 6 feet after leaving the pitcher's hand and no more than 10 feet above the ground.** This is an Umpire's judgment call. A pitch that does not meet these specifications will be considered an illegal pitch. Any pitch that hits **ANY** part of home plate is an automatic ball, if a batter does not attempt a swing. The pitcher **MUST** present the ball to the batter and will not try to deceive the batter in any shape or form. If so it will be immediately ruled an illegal pitch.
2. When a batter assumes a natural batting stance, the strike zone is the space over any part of the home plate between the batter's back shoulder and the batter's front knee.
3. Each batter will assume a 1 ball/1strike count at the start of every at bat. The batter will walk when the count has a total of four balls. The batter will strike out after three strikes. If a batter's third strike is a foul ball, one courtesy foul will be allowed. If a batter fouls off a second time on strike three, then he/she will be out.
4. Bunting or chopping the ball downward is illegal. This will result in a dead ball, batter is out and all runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
5. Stealing and leading off bases are not permitted. This will result in the runner being called out.
6. The infield fly rule will be in effect. An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not a line drive) which can be caught by any infielder with ordinary effort when first and second bases or first, second, and third bases are occupied and there are less than 2 outs.
6. **Slide Rule:** Players will be permitted to slide into all bases feet-first, however head-first slides are not allowed. Any player that slides into a base head first will be called out immediately. (EXCEPTION: Head first dives will be allowed immediately back into a bag only). Furthermore, players must slide directly into the base; "take-out" slides will be forbidden and can be subject to immediate ejection.
7. **Home Run Rule:** There is an over-the-fence homerun rule for all intramural games. The number of homeruns allowed is based on the class of play. **If a batter hits an "over the fence" homerun they do NOT have to run the bases.** After the homerun limit has been reached, any over-the-fence homerun will be ruled a single; any base runners will advance one base from their original position.  
**Home Run Limits:**  
**Competitive League – Five**  
**Recreation League – Three**
7. **Ground-Rule Double.** Any ball that is hit and then either bounces over or rolls under the outfield fence will be considered a ground-rule double. Any ball considered to be fair, that rolls into dead ball territory will be considered a ground-rule double. Any base runners will advance two bases from their original position.
8. **Dead Ball Territory:** If the ball is in play and is overthrown into dead ball territory, then all runners will be awarded two (2) bases based on the positions of the runners at the time the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner. Any fair hit ball that rolls into dead ball territory will be a dead ball. At this point the umpire will declare the ball dead, and award the two bases. Any caught foul fly ball that is unintentionally carried into dead ball territory will result in a one base award. If the act is ruled intentional, the umpire will award 2 bases.

9. The batting team is responsible for retrieving all balls hit out of the playing area (over the fence, foul territory, etc.)

### **CONDUCT OF PLAYERS**

1. **Verbal Conduct:** The use of profane language directed to one's self or another will not be tolerated. Arguing with an umpire or player in an unsportsmanlike manner will not be tolerated. Failure to abide by this rule may result in one or all of the following actions:
  - Warning
  - Ejection
2. **Ejections:** A player ejected from a game shall not participate in that game again. The umpire may eject a player from the field area if deemed necessary. If ejected from the field area, the player shall leave within two minutes. Failure to do so will result in that team to forfeit the game. An ejected player is automatically disqualified from **ALL** intramural contest (including other sports) until they see the proper staff member in charge of that sport.

### **COED MODIFICATIONS**

1. Each Coed team shall consist of 10 players (5 men and 5 women). Each team must have a minimum of 8 players (4 men and 4 women) in order to begin a game. Any team that begins a game with 8 or 9 players may add players to the bottom of its line-up (to a limit of 10 batters).
2. **Additional Hitter:** Coed teams may bat a maximum of 12 players consisting of 10 fielders and 2 additional hitters (AH) (one male and one female). If a Coed team uses an AH, it must use both a male and female AH. An AH is optional. The AH must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game. All 12 players listed in the batting order must bat and any 10 may play defense (as long as there is a maximum difference of one between males and females). Defensive positions may be changed, but the batting order must remain the same. The AH may be substituted for at any time, however, the substitute must be a player who has not yet been in the game. The starting AH may re-enter the game.
3. Teams must alternate males and females in the batting order. If a team bats 9 players, an out will be recorded in the line-up where two males or females are batting consecutively. Note that the difference between the number of males and females may not exceed one. If a team bats 9 players, the gender with more players must hit first in the lineup.
4. Position requirements are as follows:
  - A. The pitcher and catcher must be of opposite sexes.
  - B. The infield and outfield must each have two males and two females.
5. If a team walks a male batter, that male batter is automatically awarded second (2nd) base. **The next batter, a female, must bat with less than two outs.** If there are two outs she has the option to automatically walk or to hit. The female batter must make this decision before the next legal pitch is thrown.
6. A 165-foot Coed line (arc) will be painted in the outfield during Coed games. At least three (3) of the four (4) outfielders must be **BEHIND** the line during each offensive player's turn at bat. The one person that is not behind the line is considered to be a **ROVER**. They can be in front of that line at any time or as well as in the infield. Outfielders may cross the line once the ball has been contacted by the batter. **IF ANY OF**

**THE THREE OUTFIELDER'S CROSSES THE LINE PRIOR TO CONTACT BY THE BATTER, THE OFFENDED TEAM MAY CHOOSE TO TAKE THE RESULT OF THE PLAY OR RETURN THE BATTER AND RESUME THE COUNT PRIOR TO THAT PITCH.**

7. All other Texas A&M Intramural Softball rules and ASA rules apply.