

-Texas A&M University-
Department of Recreational Sports
INTRAMURAL SPORTS

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:

1. PARTICIPATION

- a. Proper identification must be presented to check in. Proper identification is a government-issued photo ID.
- b. Roster: Each player's name must appear on the roster before he/she enters a game.
- c. Any player disqualified from a contest will be removed from that game and can still play in next contest.
- d. Any player ejected from a game is automatically suspended from all intramural activities pending a meeting with the appropriate intramural staff member.
- e. Intramural staff retain the authority to require an ejected player to leave the facility. Any player instructed to leave must do so immediately.
- f. **Protest Procedure:** Judgment calls may not be protested. If a team wants to protest a rule interpretation, the protest must be made immediately at the time of the questionable incident. Notify the official. The clock will stop while a protest is being filed.
- g. **Eligibility:** The eligibility of all players is the responsibility of team captains and the individual players. Refer to the intramural handbook for details.
- h. **Blood Rule:** Players who sustain an injury causing an open wound will be required to leave the game. A player may not re-enter the contest until the flow of bodily fluids is stopped and the wound covered.
- i. **Jewelry:** Participants are not permitted to wear any jewelry.
- j. **Medical Alert Bracelets** – Permitted, must be taped flush with the skin and may be visible.
- k. **Casts/splints:** Not allowed under any circumstances. Knee braces with exposed metal, hard plastic, or metal hinges must be covered with padding or foam at least ¼ inch thick.
- l. **Religious Headwear** – In the event a participant may not expose his/her uncovered head, the intramural supervisor may approve a covering or wrap which is not abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other player and which is attached in such a way that it is highly unlikely to come off during play. This stipulation applies only to religious headwear to cover the head and does not apply to any necklaces/rings/ earrings/ bracelets or any other form of jewelry.
- m. Elastic headbands and hair control devices without metal, hard plastic, or bandanas without knots are permitted. Hard items, including, but not limited to, beads, barrettes and bobby pins are prohibited. Other head decorations or headwear are not allowed.
- n. If eyeglasses are worn each player is responsible for the safety of own glasses.
- o. Any slippery substance of a foreign nature on equipment, clothing, or an exposed part of the body is illegal.
- p. Footwear: Outdoors – all players must wear athletic tennis shoes or rubber cleats. Metal

cleats, spikes, or toe cleats will not be permitted. Five finger shoes are not considered athletic shoes.

- q. Pants – Participants are encouraged to wear athletic style shorts or pants.
- r. All equipment decisions made by the intramural staff or Rec Sports medic on duty shall be final.

2. THE GAME

- a. A game will consist of seven (7) innings or fifty (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.
- b. Each single gender team shall consist of ten (10) players. Each team must have a minimum of eight (8) players in order to begin a game. Any team that begins a game with eight (8) or nine (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 eight (8) or nine (9) players.**
- c. **Forfeit:** Every 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 (1) run for every minute the game is delayed. Teams not ready to play at ten (10) minutes after the scheduled starting time shall forfeit. “Ready to play” includes having the scorecard filled out and IDs checked.
- d. **Additional Hitters:** If a team has more than ten players, the team must choose from one of two options prior to the start of the game:
 - Bat only ten players. The remaining players on the roster can substitute in at any time during the game but can only replace the same player for whom they originally entered the game for (according to approved ASA substitution procedures).
 - Bat the entire team with the batting order remaining the same, with unlimited substitution and re-entry in the field.
- e. **Substitutions:** All substitutes must notify the Home Plate Umpire and the Scorekeeper upon entering the game. There is unlimited substitution (the player must bat in the same position in the line-up at which they started the game). The starting player and their substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time.

If a player arrives late and wasn't listed in the original lineup, they can only be a substitute for the remainder of that game. The team can include that player in the original lineup, but if they do so, a ghost out is recorded for any time that person comes to bat and is not yet present.

- f. **Courtesy Runners:** Courtesy runners are only allowed in the event of an injury. To request a courtesy runner, a team should notify the home plate umpire and scorekeeper. A courtesy runner may be either a substitute (a player not currently in the game) or the player that was the last batted out if no substitutes are available.

3. EQUIPMENT

- a. **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. Softballs are also available for check out with a valid student ID in the Penberthy south pavilion next to the softball fields

- b. **Gloves:** Participants are required to use a softball or baseball glove in all intramural softball games. If a player does not have a personal glove, Intramural gloves are also available for check out with a valid student ID in the Penberthy south pavilion next to the softball fields
- c. **Bats:** Participants are **ALLOWED TO USE ANY ASA OR USSSA NEW STAMPED BAT**. Intramurals will provide bats for all intramural games. However, you must bring your own to warm-up with. Up to date ASA or USSA stamped bats are also available for check out with a valid student ID in the Penberthy south pavilion next to the softball fields. The intramural department still has the right to determine if a bat is not eligible to be used. Any bats not deemed eligible for use is considered a **BANNED BAT**.
- d. **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 lineup.**
- e. **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.**
- f. *****New Spring 2019*** Catchers are NO LONGER required to wear a catcher's mask!** With the new pitching mat, catchers no longer need to crouch behind the batters to create a strike zone target. Catchers are encouraged to stand 5-7 feet behind the batter's box.

4. SCORING

- a. **Extra Innings:** In the event that the score remains tied after seven (7) complete innings or fifty (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.
- b. *****NEW EFFECTIVE SPRING 2019 SEASON*** Run Rule:** If a team is ahead by twenty (20) runs after three (3) complete innings (2 ½ if the home team is ahead),(15) runs after four (4) complete innings (3 1/2 if the home team is ahead), or ten (10) runs after five (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.
- c. **Called Games:** In the event of inclement weather or power failure of more than fifteen (15) minutes, the following will constitute a complete game:
 - i. Four innings have been completed (3 1/2 if the home team is leading).
 - ii. 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 Supervisor.

5. RULES OF PLAY

PITCHING

- a. 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.
- b. The pitch must be thrown at a continuous moderate speed and must arc at least six (6) feet after leaving the pitcher's hand and no more than twelve (12) 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.
- c. A 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.
- d. *****NEW EFFECTIVE SPRING 2019 SEASON***** Intramural Sports will be using a "pitching mat," which is essentially an extension of home plate. Any non-illegal pitch that hits **ANY** part of home plate or **ANY** part of the pitching mat is automatically a strike. Pitches that land anywhere other than on top of home plate shall be called balls.
- e. Intentional Walks – if a team wishes to walk a batter intentionally, notify the home plate umpire and the walk will automatically be awarded with no pitches thrown.

BATTING

- a. 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.
- b. **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 (5), Corps and Fraternity Leagues – Five (5), Recreation League – Three (3)*
- c. **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.

BASERUNNING AND OTHER

- a. Stealing and leading off bases are not permitted. This will result in the runner being called out.
- b. 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.
- c. **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. The player cannot dive head first back into if they are more than a body length away from the bag.) Furthermore, players must slide directly into the base; “take-out” slides will be forbidden and can be subject to immediate ejection.

- d. **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 two (2) bases.
- e. The batting team is responsible for retrieving all balls hit out of the playing area (over the fence, foul territory, etc.)

6. COED MODIFICATIONS

- a. Each Coed team shall consist of ten (10) players (5 men and 5 women). Each team must have a minimum of eight (8) players (4 men and 4 women) in order to begin a game. Any team that begins a game with eight (8) or nine (9) players may add players to the bottom of its line-up (to a limit of 10 batters).
- b. **Additional Hitters:** If a team has more than ten players, the team must choose from one of two options prior to the start of the game:
 - Bat only ten players. The remaining players on the roster can substitute in at any time during the game but can only replace the same player for whom they originally entered the game for (according to approved ASA substitution procedures).
 - Bat the entire team (7 male & 7 female) with the batting order remaining the same, with unlimited substitution and re-entry in the field.
- c. Teams must alternate males and females in the batting order. If a team bats nine (9) players, an out will be recorded in the line-up where two (2) males or females are batting consecutively. Note that the difference between the number of males and females may not exceed one (1). If a team bats nine (9) players, the gender with more players must hit first in the lineup.
- d. 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 (2) outs.** If there are two (2) 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.
- e. 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 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.**

