

SSC Official Coed Softball Rules

OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Softball is played between two teams on a diamond, with 9 players from one team on the playing surface at a time. The object of the game is to score more runs (points) than the other team by batting (hitting) a ball into play and running around the bases, touching each one in succession.
GAME LENGTH & FOUL WEATHER GUIDELINES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games are seven (7) innings in length with a time limit of 90 minutes (unless otherwise indicated in your schedule). Games start and end according to your online SSC schedule. If games start late, games must finish at the scheduled time. No new inning can start with 5 minutes left before the formal end time. If a new inning is started and is not completed (both teams receive their at bat), the score will revert to that of the last completed inning. Games are played rain or shine. If a game is stopped due to lightning, four (4) innings will constitute a complete game. If three (3) innings or less are played, it will constitute as a tie game. If one team shows up during foul weather to play and the other team is missing, or if one team leaves mid-game and there is an opportunity to continue play - it is an automatic win for the present team.
EQUIPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams are responsible for bringing to each game; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A set of 4 bases 4 batting helmets 3 Softballs 2 pylons (when required – see Registration page) 1 catcher's mask 1 scorebook <p>Various softball equipment is available to rent (with a deposit) through SSC. Please refer to the Website – Sport League – Softball – Sport Info Tab for rental equipment information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Batters and Base Runners are required to wear a helmet (mandatory). Helmets are the responsibility of each team to provide. All teams must have a minimum of 4 helmets (one for the batter and 3 for potential base runners). Catchers are required to wear a mask (mandatory). Players are required to provide their own gloves, bats, and appropriate footwear (players are not permitted to use metal cleats or wooden bats). Bats can only be used from the NSA Canada Approved Bat List, with logo certification from either the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA 1.20bpf), National Softball Association (NSA) or American Softball Association (ASA). Bats on the Non-Approved ASA/NSA list are not permitted. Softballs: Games should be played using the provided SSC league softball, or teams can decide to purchase their own. Game balls must be equivalent to 12"/.44 cor/375-400lbs compression or 12"/.52 cor/275-300lbs compression. Scorebooks: SSC softball scorebooks are included in your team registration and handed out with the equipment. If additional score sheets are needed, a printable copy is available to download in the rules section. A default will occur if a team does not adhere to the equipment regulations. However, captains may agree to waive specific equipment rules, as long as it is agreed upon before the game begins. In the event there is a default dispute and the game was played, the SSC ruling is that the game counts.
PLAYERS ON FIELD AND GENDER RATIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams are comprised of nine (9) players (1 rover) on the field with a minimum of three (3) of each gender. A team can play with a minimum of 7 people as long as there are two (2) of each gender (i.e. 2 women) and as long as the batting order stays the same (see the section below about batting). In this scenario, on defense, teams must then play with fewer players on the field (i.e. if you play with 2 players below the minimum requirement, you must be short 2 players on defense). The rover may play anywhere on the field with the exception of the catcher's position. The rover cannot stand within the baselines before the ball is hit.
GAME & FIELD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Captains should meet before the start of the game and confirm / agree upon ground rules with regards to boundaries, base set-up and home run line.

<p>SET-UP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To view a diagram of a softball field set-up, click on the pdf document in the rules section. • Teams are responsible for setting up the bases at 60 feet (approximately 20-25 paces). • Each team captain must bring their four (4) bases to every game (total 8 bases) as first base and home plate will require "safety bases". <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First – safety base: There should be a base for the first base fielder to touch and a separate base for the runner to step on (with a distance of 6 inches between the bases). ○ Home – safety base: There should be an extra base laid out parallel to the existing home plate (at least 24 inches away from it). A line is to be drawn in the dirt between the two to enable the runner to touch the safety bag or cross the line in a safe manner, in order to score a run. ○ Commitment Line: There is a "commitment line" halfway between third base and the home plate, marked with an extra base or by drawing a line in the dirt across the base path. This marks the no-return point of a base runner going towards home plate. ○ Other Bases: For the other bases, fielders should be touching only one side of the base, allowing a base runner to touch the base without interference. • If a field does not have a home run fence, teams are responsible for setting up the home run line, using the 4 pylons at 210-250ft (approximately 70-83 paces) from home base. Some fields may require different lengths. Please ensure both teams agree with the home run line location before the start of the game. • Batting teams are responsible for providing base coaches at first and third base. These are typically players on your team that are batting further down the lineup at the start of each inning.
<p>GAME START & INNING STRUCTURE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine the home team (bats in the bottom of the inning), teams can either choose to do a coin toss or rock-paper-scissors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exception: During playoffs the higher ranked team will have the choice to bat first or second. • Each inning is played with three (3) outs or when a team scores a maximum of eight (8) runs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exception: teams do not have a run limit in the final inning of the game. • If the home team is winning after the completion of the top of the 7th inning, the game is over and the home team does not bat.
<p>PITCHING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team at bat provides their own pitcher. • The pitcher can pitch from wherever they choose (for safety we recommend at least 30ft from the batter). • If a ball that is hit touches the pitcher, then the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ball is declared dead. ○ pitch is redone. ○ base runners return to their previous bases. ○ pitch count is then restored.
<p>PITCHING SCREEN (OPTIONAL IF TEAMS WISH TO BRING THEIR OWN)</p>	<p>If teams wish to use a pitching screen, the following rules apply;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once screen is set in an agreed upon position by both team captains, it cannot be touched by any player and must remain upright (the screen becomes part of the field). • Left handed pitchers pitch on the left side, right handed pitchers pitch on the right. • If a batted ball hits the screen (either ground ball or direct) then the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ball is declared dead. ○ pitch is redone. ○ base runners return to their previous bases. ○ pitch count is then restored. • If a fielder throws a ball to home but hits the screen, the ball is still live as the pitching screen is considered part of the field.
<p>FIELDING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no infield fly rule in effect. However, it is poor sportsmanship to purposely drop a ball to induce a double play. • Players in the field are not allowed to stand inside the baselines before a player attempts to hit a ball (e.g. the shortstop cannot stand beside the pitcher before the batter has hit the ball). • A fielder cannot obstruct a base runner without the ball, or the runner is awarded an automatic base. • Once the pitcher collects the ball from a fielder, play is dead. Therefore, if a runner is less than halfway to the next base, they must return to their previous base. If they are past halfway, they may advance to the base. All close calls should be made by the pitcher. The pitcher should make their best effort to catch the ball from the fielding team.

<p>BATTING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third and crosses the home base line before three players are determined 'out' to end the inning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exception: a run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a 'force' play in which the third out is made. ○ A runner can score on a 'non-forced' third out, as long as they cross the home base line before the 'non-force' play is made. • Every batter can receive a maximum of three (3) pitches. • All foul balls, wild pitches, strikes and balls count as one of the three (3) pitches. The only exception is a ball that hits the pitcher (see pitching). • Batting Order: No more than 2 males/females can bat consecutively in the batting order, including when the bottom of the order meets the top of the order. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A team must use their full roster for batting (e.g. players cannot only play defense) and all players must bat before a male player can bat for the second time (this may change the male/female order from inning to inning). <i>Example: If a team only has two women present, the batting order will be male 1, male 2, female A, male 3, male 4, female B, male 5, male 6, female A, etc. The spot where female C should have been will not be an automatic out.</i> ○ The batting order should remain intact from inning to inning. This means the last batter out in an inning is followed by the next subsequent gender at the start of a new inning. ○ Any players arriving after their team has batted in the first inning, will be inserted into the bottom of the gender batting order. • There is no bunting or faking a bunt. However, a ball that is hit with a full swing, but does not go past the pitcher IS a live, playable ball. • A 'foul ball' pop-up behind home plate can only be caught for an out if it goes higher than 10 feet. A ball not exceeding this height is considered a 'strike'. • If a fielder attempts to catch a ball in foul territory and misses, the result is a dead ball (strike against batter). The same applies if a foul ball comes in contact with a fielder in foul territory, but lands in fair territory (remains dead ball, strike against batter). • Players are considered out by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Striking out. ○ Fly ball caught by the defense. ○ Foul out. ○ Base runner tagged by the defense or forced out at a base.
<p>BASE RUNNING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base runners can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overrun first base without being tagged out as long as they continue to follow the foul line or stay to the right of it. ○ Advance one base if a ball is overthrown at first or third base and goes 'out of play' (e.g. over the fence, into the dugout, beyond the extended backstop, etc.). If the ball stays in play (i.e. hits the fence) then the ball is live and runners may advance at their own risk. ○ Be hit by a batted ball - in this circumstance the ball is live and playable although base runners must make every effort to avoid a batted ball. ○ Courtesy runners are permitted for a hitter or injured base runner; however, the courtesy runner must be the last out of the same gender. If a courtesy runner is being used for a batter, please notify the opponents team captain before the start of the game. The courtesy runner must start to the right side of the catcher (facing towards the pitcher) in line with the 3rd base foul line and can only run when contact has been made with the ball (see the downloadable pdf Softball Diagram for specific start location). • Base runners cannot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Slide into the bases (any base runner that slides is automatically out). ○ Steal a base or leadoff (base runners must wait until the batter makes contact with the ball before leaving the base). ○ Move more than 3 feet away from the base line (imaginary direct line between the bases) when a tag play is being made on the runner, or they will be deemed out. ○ Cause interference to a defending fielder who is attempting to make a play on the ball (automatic out). ○ Touch home plate. Runners can only touch safety base or cross 'line' (automatic out). • Tag Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If pop fly ball is caught, base runners must retouch (or 'tag-up') the base they were on at the time of the pitch, before attempting to advance. If a pop fly ball is not caught, a tag-up is not required and

	<p>base runners may try to advance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment Line: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Players cannot return to third base if they have crossed the 'commitment line' between third base and home plate (a base runner that does is automatically out). ○ A "force out" will always be in effect between third base and home plate once the base runner has crossed over the "commitment line". This means that a team only needs to touch home plate with the ball in their possession to make the out. Under no circumstances are tag plays permitted at home.
MERCY & HOME RUN RULE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Rule: If a team is up by 15 runs or more after the 5th inning of play, the losing team has the option of calling the game or choosing to continue. • Home Run + 3 Rule: <i>This rule applies only to Recreation level leagues.</i> A team can only hit + 3 home runs more than their opponents. Example: If team A has hit 3 home runs, they must wait for Team B to hit a home run before Team A can hit another. If a team hits a + 4 home run, the batter is awarded a single base (not a home run) and base runners only advance if they are forced (same as a 'walk' scenario). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A home run is defined as hitting the ball beyond the outfield (between the foul lines). ○ If the field has a home run fence, the ball must go over the fence. ○ When using an unfenced ball diamond, the following scenario applies; To be deemed a home run, the ball must carry in the air and land outside of the home run line (see rules for pylon set-up). If the ball rolls through the home run line, it is an automatic ground rule double. ○ A fielder can stand before the line and jump in an attempt to catch the ball. However, if a fielder catches the ball and is standing outside of the line, it is deemed a home run. Please use your best judgement. ○ The home run rule does not apply to 'in the park home runs' or fielding errors (the ball does not leave the playing field).
MAKING CALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foul ball calls should be made by the catcher (balls that are hit outside of the base lines). • Base calls are the responsibility of the base coaches (first and third base) and pitcher (second and home base) to make impartial calls. If base coaches are not present, close calls should be made by the pitcher. • Home run calls should be made by the closest fielder with support from the base coaches. • Calls should be made as neutral and impartial as possible.
PLAYOFFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playoff games should be 80 minutes in length in anticipation of needing the extra time to settle a tie. • During playoffs, if the game is tied after the completion of 7 innings, or the expired time, teams will follow this format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The team that is up to bat will start the inning by placing their 'last out' from the previous inning on second base, with two (2) outs. Once three (3) outs have been reached, the other team will then place their 'last out' from the previous inning on second base (also with two (2) outs) and proceed to bat until three (3) outs is reached. Teams will take turns doing this until the score is settled upon the completion of a full inning. • Team playoff position: Ties in the standings will be broken first by head-to-head play. If there are more than 2 teams that are tied, all the teams must have played each other in order for the results to go to head-to-head. Otherwise, least points against, then +/-, then most points for will determine the placement in that order. • The SSC office will update the playoff schedule once all scores have been submitted and after the last regular season game. Please do not assume the time/location of your playoff game until team names have been posted into the schedule.

Remember... Always have fun!