



CAMPUS RECREATION

SOFTBALL RULES

I. THE GAME

1. The use of tobacco, alcohol and/or drugs at an Intramural Sports activity or participating in an Intramural Sports activity under the influence of alcohol or drugs is not permitted and is against University policy. **This includes CHEWING TOBACCO.**
2. **GAME TIME EQUALS FORFEIT TIME.** If a team has no team members present at the game time, it will result in a forfeit. If at least one team member is present, the other team can either take the win or wait for the team to show up. For every **minute (up to 15)** that a team does not have the minimum amount of players, 1 run will be awarded to the opposing team.
3. A team will be able to score a maximum of 7 runs per inning. After the 7th run scores, the opposite team will be at bat.

II. PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

1. Ten players can take the field at a time. However, a team only needs a minimum of seven players (co-rec: 8) to start a game and must have a pitcher and a catcher.
 - a. Co-Rec: Teams may not have a difference greater than 2 between genders on the field (e.g. A maximum of six (6) players of one gender may be on the field or (5) to (3))
2. Teams have the option of batting up to a maximum of 15 players. The batting order will be established before the game starts. Players that arrive after the game has begun will be added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - a. Co-Rec: Teams must alternate genders between batters
3. Each player must be in the batting order. Players have the option to play in the field, but everyone must bat.
4. The home team is listed on the right side of the score sheet and has the last at bat.
5. A game shall consist of seven innings, or 50 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning shall be started after 40 minutes; however, if an inning is in progress, that inning will be completed.
6. If the game is tied after seven innings or at the time limit, it shall end in a tie (except in the playoffs).
 - However, if time expires in the middle of an inning and the game is tied, the game will continue until the home team finishes their at-bat. If the go-ahead run is scored at any point during the home team's at bat the game will be over. If time expires in the middle of an inning and the home team is losing, the game will continue until the home team completes their at bat. If time expires in the middle of an inning and the home team is leading, the game will be over.
7. There is a run cap of 7 runs per inning. After a team scores 7 runs, they will then switch to defense.
- There is no run cap in the last inning
8. The mercy rule for Softball is:
 - If a team is up by 20 runs after 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, or 10 runs after 5 innings the game will be called. The inning must be played to its entirety.
9. Gloves are available for checkout from the BRIC Equipment Checkout. Bats and softballs are provided by Intramural Sports.
10. Any bat that is not ASA approved is illegal. Bat handles must be taped or rubber covered. No wooden bats. Bats may not be shaved, any tampering with the barrel of the bat is considered shaving. (Please refer to http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp to see if your bat is illegal)
11. No metal or screw-in cleats are allowed.
12. All batters and base runners are required to wear BATTING HELMETS
13. Both base coaches are required to wear COACHING HELMETS when on the field.

III. FIELD SET-UP

1. Pitching distance is 45 feet.
2. Bases are 60 feet apart.
3. The home plate extension will be used along with home plate to call balls and strikes. For scoring purposes, players must touch the home plate extension and the catcher will use home plate.
4. The dead ball territory is established by the backstop fence extended (this is an imaginary line extended from the backstop). Any ball that travels past this line is automatically considered dead.
5. **CO-REC ONLY** : outfield restriction line is 140ft from home plate

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. An **APPEAL PLAY** is a play upon which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a player. The appeal must be made before the next pitch. Examples include: A runner leaving early on a tag-up, a runner missing a base, batting out of order, etc... These must be appealed to the umpire by the defensive team before the next pitch.
2. A **BASE PATH** is an imaginary line **3 feet to either side** of a direct line between the bases.
3. A **BATTER-BASERUNNER** is a player who has finished their turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
4. A **CATCH** is a legally caught ball which occurs when the fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with their hands or glove. (If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hands or glove). It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he/she contacts the ball, collides with another player or falls on the ground, and drops the ball as a result of the collision. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove he/she has complete control of the ball and that their release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch.
5. A **FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that settles on fair territory between home and first base or home and third base; or that is on or over fair territory including any part of first and third base when bounding to the outfield, or that touches first or third base; or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of any umpire or player; or first falls on fair ground beyond first and third.

NOTE: A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, and as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time he/she touches the ball.

NOTE: If a fielder catches a ball in foul territory and then runs into dead ball territory on their own, the batter is considered out but the any runner on base gets one base.
6. A **FORCE-OUT** is an out which can be made only when a base runner loses the right to the base which he/she is occupying because the batter becomes a base runner, and before the batter or succeeding base runner has been put out.
7. An **INFIELD FLY** is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, OR first, second, and third bases are occupied with less than two outs. The catcher and any outfielder who positions themselves in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

NOTE: When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an **infield fly**, the umpire shall immediately declare **"INFIELD FLY"** for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire shall declare **"infield fly, if fair"**. **The batter is automatically out on an infield fly.**

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.
8. **INTERFERENCE** is the act of a defensive player which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball, or the act of an offensive player, which impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play.
9. **OBSTRUCTION** is the act of a fielder, while not in possession of the ball or in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of the base runner that is legally running bases. If a defensive player obstructs the runner, the player will be awarded the base.

V. BATTING

1. The batter shall not have their entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit, or the batter will be out.
2. **EACH BATTER BEGINS THEIR AT-BAT ASSUMING AN 0-1 (0 BALLS AND 1 STRIKE) COUNT.**
3. The batter shall not step to the other side of the plate while the pitcher is in position to pitch. If the player steps over the plate to hit the ball, they are called out.
4. The batter shall not hit the ball with an illegal bat.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and base runners may not advance.
5. The batting order must be on the scoresheet and must be submitted to the umpire before the game.
6. A team must bat through the entire lineup continuously. Late arriving players may be added to the end of the batting order immediately upon arrival.

EFFECT: Batting out of order will be ruled on by the umpire at the time of the incident. If the player batting out of order hits the ball fair on the first pitch of the illegal at-bat, the player who batted illegally will be called out, and all base runners must return to the bases previously held before the player batted illegally.
7. The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball.

EFFECT: The batter is out. The ball is dead and base runners must return to the last base that was touched at the time of the interference. (With less than two outs and a runner on third base and the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate, the batter is not out because the runner is out.)
8. Members of the team at bat shall not interfere with a player attempting to field a foul fly ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead and the batter is out and base runners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch.
9. The batter shall not hit a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and base runners may not advance.
10. The batter is **OUT** under the additional circumstances:

- A. When the batter bunts or chops the ball downward. The batter must take a full swing.
 - B. When the batter's fly ball is legally caught
 - C. When an infield fly is declared.
 - D. If the batter's fair ball touches them before touching a fielder while they are in fair territory.
 - E. When, after the batter hits a fair ball, he/she or first base is "tagged" before he/she touches first base.
 - F. When the batter hits a line drive within 5 feet of the pitcher
11. If the batter hits two consecutive foul balls after getting two strikes, the batter is out. If the ball lands or is touched and not caught in fair territory, then the ball is dead; if the ball is caught on the fly and the fielder remains in the live playing area, the ball is alive and in play.
 12. A batter may hit an illegal pitch.
 13. Co-Rec: On a walk to a male batter (intentional or not) the male batter will advance to second base and the following female may be given the option of hitting or receiving an automatic walk.

VI. DEFENSE

1. Defensive substitutions may be made at any time.
2. The team at bat will have the ball pitched (underhand) by a member of the opposing team.
3. Pitchers are allowed two warm-up pitches per inning.
4. A pitch must be no higher than 12ft and no lower than 6ft. If a pitch is outside of this window, the umpire will yell "illegal pitch" and the pitch will be considered a ball. The batter may hit an illegal pitch. If an illegal pitch is swung on, then it will be treated as a strike.
5. The pitcher shall take a position with one or both feet in contact with the pitching rubber.
6. Before pitching, the pitcher must come to a full stop with the ball held in the pitching hand or both hands in front of the body for at least one second.
7. When a defensive player fakes a tag when he/she does not have the ball, obstruction shall be called.
8. When the ball is in play and is overthrown into foul territory, then the ball is dead when it is overthrown out-of-play. If it occurs on the first throw from an infielder, base runners are awarded one base beyond the base they legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the overthrow is during subsequent action, or by an outfielder, base runners are awarded one beyond the base they legally occupied at the time the throw was made.
9. 15 feet passed 3rd base will be a "commit" cone outside of the base path on the 3rd baseline. Once the runner has passed the "commit" cone, all plays at home plate are considered force plays. This is to avoid collisions at home plate. Once the player passes the "commit" cone they must continue to home plate.
10. **CO-REC ONLY:** Outfield Restriction Line: All outfielders must begin the play behind the outfield restriction line (140-foot arc from home plate), and remain behind the line until the batter hits the pitch.
 - a. Penalty: The batter and all base runners will be awarded one base unless each has advanced one base safely, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the violation, and all runners may advance at their own peril.

VII. BASERUNNING

1. A run shall not score if the third out of the inning is the result of:
 - A. The batter being put out before legally touching first base.
 - B. A base runner being forced out due to the batter becoming a base runner.
2. The base runner must touch each base in order.
3. Players may not overrun bases, except first base, they must stay in foul territory.
4. When a base runner must return to a base while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
5. Players can slide to avoid being tagged or hit by a thrown ball. Sliding may not be done with the intent of interfering with a fielder or breaking up a play. In such cases the runner breaking up the play is out. A player may not slide at first or at home plate. If this happens, the player is out.
6. When the base runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out he/she is entitled to hold the base until he/she has legally touched the next base or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding base runner.
7. When a base runner dislodges a base from its proper position, the runner or succeeding runners on the same play are not compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. (The runner should be near the spot of the base).
8. Two base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

EFFECT: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it; the other base runner may be put out by being touched with the ball.
9. Failure of preceding runner to touch a base, or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a succeeding base runner who touches in proper order. However, if the failure to touch a base in regular order or to leave a base legally on a caught fly ball is the third out of the inning no succeeding run may score.
10. No runner may return to touch a missed base if the base was left illegally, after a following runner has scored or once they enter the team area. After the ball becomes dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one that was left after he/she has advanced to and touched a base or base left illegally.
11. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before attempting to advance bases.
12. The base runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
 - A. When the ball is hit fair.
 - B. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
 - C. When the ball is overthrown into fair territory.

13. Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:
- A. When a fielder obstructs the base runner from taking a base unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready to tag the base runner.
- EFFECT:** When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call and signal "**obstruction**".
14. If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he/she had last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.
15. Base runners must return to their bases when a batter or base runner is called out for interference. Other base runners shall return to the last base which was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference.
16. Base runners are not permitted to steal a base.
17. The base runner is out:
- A. When in running to any base, he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between bases in an effort to avoid a tag.
 - B. When, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched with the ball in the hand or glove of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
 - C. When on a force-out, a fielder holds the ball on the base to which the base runner is forced to advance before the runner reaches the base.
 - D. When a base runner physically passes a preceding base runner before that runner has been put out.
 - E. When the base runner leaves their base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has touched a fielder, provided the play is appealed.
 - F. When the base runner fails to touch each base and the play is appealed.
NOTE: On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch or before the defensive team has left the field.
 - G. When the base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
 - H. When a base runner is struck with a fair batted ball while off base and before it passes an infielder.
 - I. When a runner intentionally kicks the ball which an infielder has missed.
 - J. When the base coach touches or holds the runner physically to assist this runner in returning to or leaving the base.
 - K. When the third base coach runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The base runner nearest to third base shall be declared out.
 - L. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base to which a base runner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding difficulty of making the play.
 - M. When the base runner runs the bases in reverse order, to confuse the defensive team or to make a farce out of the game. This includes the batter-runner moving back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag.
 - N. When the base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball is hit.
18. Base runners are not out under the following circumstances:
- A. When a base runner runs behind the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
 - B. When a base runner does not run in a direct line to the base providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in their possession.
 - C. When a base runner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
 - D. When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
 - E. When a base runner holds their base until a fly ball touches a fielder and then attempts to advance.
 - F. When hit by a batted ball when touching their base, unless they intentionally interfere with the ball or fielder making a play.
 - G. When a base runner dislodges a base from its proper position. (A base runner who has made such a base safely shall not be out for being off the base. He/she may return to that base without liability to be put out when the base has been replaced).
 - H. When the base runner is hit by a fair batted ball, after it is touched or touches any fielder.
 - I. When a base runner is hit by a defender throwing the ball (e.g. in a pickle), the play continues. The runner is only out if she/he ran outside the baseline.
19. Base runners may NOT dive head first into a base, unless going back to a base.