

TRI SPORTS Softball Rules

Revised September 2025

Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Rules will be used with the following modifications and clarifications:

Equipment/Field Set-Up: TRI SPORTS supplies game balls, bases, and bats (upon request). It is the teams' responsibility to bring their own gloves as well as any warm-up softballs. Metal cleats are not allowed; players wearing metal cleats must remove them or be removed from the game. Athletic shoes must be worn.

Game Time: Game clock starts at the scheduled time or 5 minutes after the completion of the prior game (whichever is later); please have your team waiting outside the dugout, with your batting order filled out, at the time the prior game finishes and take the dugout ASAP, even if some members of the prior team are still packing up. Team intros & rock/paper/scissors should be done every game, and they count towards the time, so drop your bag and hurry out to home plate ASAP. You can unpack your bag & get settled in after intros.

Format: Games are 7 innings in length with a time limit of :60 mins.; a new inning will not be started once we hit the :57-min. mark. Fielding teams are comprised of ten (10) players (4of / 6if) with a minimum of four (4) females; there are no infield/outfield minimums for females. The losing team ALWAYS bats in the top of the final inning, so the home team, if losing going into the final inning, will have back-to-back at-bats. The away team never bats back-to-back because they bat at the top of each inning. Teams get equal at-bats (if needed).

Forfeits: A team can play with a min. of 9 (3of / 6if), as long as 3 of the players are female, and it counts. A forfeit will occur if a team can't field 3+ females and 9+ total players by 5 minutes after the scheduled game time. PLEASE be responsible, and respectful of your opponents, by taking a headcount after your game each week, to find out if your team may be needing a sub or 2 the following week. TRI SPORTS has lots of ways we can help teams get subs and avoid forfeits but contacting us any later than 2 days prior (3 days for the Sunday league) can be super-challenging. A team should never forfeit. It cheats everyone out of the fun.

Player Eligibility: SUBSTITUTES are allowed in the regular season, but must be legally registered players, either on the roster of another team or [register for a \\$10 1-day guest pass](#).

Playoffs: players must be on that team's roster and play in a minimum of 1 regular season game to be eligible to play in the playoffs. No subs. No exceptions.

Officials/Sportsmanship: Officials have the final say on all calls. Arguing with/disrespecting the official is grounds for ejection (+mandatory 1-game suspension). Players should always act in a sportsmanlike manner toward the official. Disrespecting your opponent is equally unacceptable and severe cases may result in ejection/suspension. Even calling "I got it" at an opponent attempting to catch a fly ball is unsportsmanlike, so let's keep it fun and maximize our playing time rather than wasting it arguing.

Hitting

- 1) Balls/Strikes will be determined by a strike mat/plate combination (New in 2023). Any pitched ball that hits either the strike mat or the plate – and travels 6' to 12' in min./max. height - will be a strike.
- 2) Up to 3 home runs (OTP) will be allowed per team. A team hitting their 4th+ before their opponent hits 3 will be awarded an out each time. Once/if both teams reach 3 home runs, then a 1-up system is in-effect (i.e. Team A can hit a 6th HR (but not a 7th) if Team B has only hit 5.)
- 3) Batters start with a 1-1 count. A courtesy foul is allowed (1st foul ball with 2 strikes is a foul; 2nd is an out).
- 4) Bunting is NOT allowed.

- 5) Teams bat any combo of NF/F (non-female/female) or NF/NF/F, so long as 3 non-females NEVER bat in a row (including bottom to top). Sportsmanship dictates that the NF/NF/F combo be used only when needed to avoid 3NFs in a row. In instances of injury, causing 3NFs to bat in a row, a team can accept an out, or cycle females to avoid 3NFs in a row. "Cycling" means that Female B will always bat 2 non-females after Female A, and Female C bats 2 non-females after Female B, but the non-females are different every time as the Females get more 'at bats' than the non-females.
- 6) Where a pitcher's screen is available, batted balls hitting the screen will be called a foul ball (1st time) and the batter is out if they hit the screen a 2nd time in the same at-bat. This resets with each at-bat (New in 2023).
- 7) Everyone on the roster bats the entire game (even when not playing in the field).
- 8) Mercy rule: If a team is up by 15 runs after 4 innings or 10+ after 5, the game is final; teams may scrimmage (w/o umpire) for the remainder of their time (until 5 minutes before the next scheduled game time).
- 9) A max. of 8 runs per inning may be scored by the hitting team. However, If that team is down by more than 8 runs, they may score the number of runs needed to tie the game. There is no run limit in the playoffs.
- 10) Caught foul balls must fly above the batter's head to be an "out"; otherwise, it's just a foul ball.
- 11) Do Not Throw Your Bat. Batters throwing the bat will first receive a warning and afterward, it is an out.
- 12) Warm-up pitches are not guaranteed. Please warm-up off-field &, if time permits, warm-up may be allowed.
- 13) Dugout gates should be closed at all times. Balls thrown through the fielding team's open gate results in an extra base awarded to runners. Balls through the batting team's gate are "dead" and runners do not advance.
- 14) Only ASA/USSSA approved slow pitch bats may be used, by rule. Any player using an illegal bat will be ejected from the game. Bats the umpire deems to give no advantage may be allowed (umpire's discretion).

Running

- 1) A runner may not leave the base prior to the ball being batted. Players leading off will be called out.
- 2) Sliding is allowed.
- 3) Pinch runners are allowed from 1st base only & must be the person of the same sex immediately before the batter that made the last out. Player must be injured during the game or risking further injury to receive a pinch runner. If a player is too injured to run prior to the game, they should not be in the lineup.
- 4) 1st & home plate will have "safety bases". There are the original bases for the 1st baseperson & catcher to touch, & separate safety bases for the runners to step on. On close plays at 1st, runner must always use the safety base. When there is no throw to 1st, runner may use the original base.
- 5) There is a "commitment line" 2/3 the way from 3rd base to home, marked by a line/cone. A force out is in effect once any part of the runner's foot crosses the "commitment line". Once the runner crosses, they cannot return to 3rd base; if they do, it's an automatic out. The catcher must always make a play at the original home plate; any attempt to play the safety plate or tag the runner, results in a "safe" call. Runner must touch the safety plate before a fielder-with possession of the ball- touches the original home plate to score a run. Runners touching the original home plate or sliding into the safety plate will automatically be called out.

Fielding

- 1) All players should field a minimum of 1 inning.
- 2) Infielders must stay beyond the base path & outfielders must stay on the grass, until the ball is hit.
- 3) Infield fly rule is in effect. Infield fly only applies to a 'reasonable effort' fly when runners are on 1st & 2nd.