



Softball Rules

Revised: Mar 2023

TEAM SIZE, ROSTERS, & UNIFORMS

League format: 10 v 10

Team size: Teams must have a minimum of 12 players on the roster.

Teams must have at least eight players to play an official game. When fielding, teams will have no more than 10 players on the field. All players, however, will bat.

- To play with 10 players on the field, 3 of the 10 players must be female players. There are no ratio requirements on where the female players must be positioned on the field (Ex: 2 in the Outfield, 1 in Infield). Female players can play in any defensive configuration (Ex: All female players in the infield, all female players in the outfield, or 1 outfield, 2 infield, etc).

If a team plays with eight players they are not required to have a catcher.

Information about using substitute players can be found in the back of this document and also on our website under “Sports” and “Register as a SUB”:

<https://playnola.leaguelab.com/page/register-as-a-sub>

All rostered players are required to wear their playNOLA-issued shirt for the games, unless other team shirts have been approved by playNOLA.

Players are not allowed to wear metal cleats/spikes. Players must wear athletic shoes to play. No open toed shoes.

Slowpitch bats that are stamped with an ASA or USSSA stamp are allowed to be used in league play. This can also include bats that have multiple stamps, as long as it features an ASA or USSSA stamp. No Senior League Bats. No Fastpitch Bats. Any equipment in question should be brought to the attention of the game coordinator and/or umpire. The game coordinator will make all final decisions with regard to equipment discrepancies.

GAME LENGTH, TIME, & SCORING

Games will be seven innings or 70 minutes, whichever comes first.



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The game coordinator (or umpire) will keep the game's time. If seven innings cannot be played in the allotted time, the referee will announce when the last full inning (top and bottom) will begin. A new inning will not begin once official game time hits 60 mins.

(Note: Due to differing circumstances in each and every game, some games may finish short of 70 minutes in length. Please respect the referee's call in this matter. He/She must keep all games on time in fairness to teams playing later hours and due to facility permit restrictions. See "Run Scoring Limit & Mercy Rule" below.)

FORFEITS

Teams are allowed a 10-minute grace period, but that will be taken from total game time of 70 mins.

If you know in advance that your team will not make the game, please inform your league coordinator/playNOLA office as soon as possible. This will allow staff to contact the opposing team to notify them of the forfeit or try to schedule another opponent for them.

If after the 10-minute grace period, a team cannot field a full team, a forfeit will be assigned. Teams can scrimmage. If a team has 2 forfeits in the season, they are not eligible for playoffs.

BALLS, STRIKES, FOULS, & WALKS

The pitch should go between six and 10 feet above the ground.

All batters will begin with one ball and one strike. A batter with two strikes is allowed one more "free foul" ball. A foul ball after the "free foul" ball will result in an out.

No bunts. No leads. No steals.

If a male batter is walked, and a female batter follows him in the batting order the walked male batter moves to 2nd base, and the female batter hits, regardless of the # of outs in the inning.

Balls that are batted on a line drive that hit the pitcher are automatic outs. A Ball hit back to the pitcher and is within the pitcher's wingspan can be called out. Balls hit back to the pitcher on the ground can be reviewed for intent. Teams and players will receive a warning after a pitcher is hit with a line drive batted ball.



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BATTING ORDER & BASE RUNNING

Up to 10 players can play in the field (with 3 female players on the field at all times). However, if a team has more than 10 players in total, all players will bat. No more than two male players can bat in a row at any time. If a team has more male players than female players, the female players will bat in the rotation so that no more than two males bat in a row. The order of the female players should remain fixed during that game. Before the first male player can bat again, the rest of the team should have already batted.

- Should a team not have at least 3 female players in their lineup, an out will be assessed when the 3rd female batters place in the lineup comes up. This will be in effect until the 3rd female batter arrives or if they don't arrive, for the duration of the game.

There are no designated hitters allowed. If a player is to bat, they must play at least one inning in the field. If a player only plays the field and does not bat, they will be considered an out.

Should a player need to be removed from the lineup due to injury, the order will shift to accommodate no more than 2 male players batting in a row. Should the injury occur to the 3rd female batter, then no out will be assessed in her position in the order, however, the 2 remaining female batters must rotate so that there are never more than 2 male players batting in a row.

Pinch runners are allowed for players with injuries and/or mobility issues. Players who need designated runners must be identified at the beginning of the game to the umpire and opposing team captain. The player who needs a pinch runner must make it to their base safely, the play must be ruled over, time must be called and the pinch runner must be checked in by the umpires acknowledgement prior to the first pitch of the next play.

- The pinch runner must be the last out of the same gender (guy for guy/girl for girl). Only one pinch runner, per gender, allowed per inning. Should there be no batted outs in that inning at the time, then the pinch runner must be a player who has already batted in the lineup in the previous inning.

RUN SCORING LIMIT & MERCY RULE

There is a 7-run limit per team, per inning through innings 1-4. If inning 4 is announced to be the final inning of the game, the runs limit is lifted. Unlimited runs may be scored in innings 5, 6, and 7.



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If either team is ahead by 10 or more runs after the 5th inning, the game will be called on mercy rule.

Ties are allowed in the regular season. In the playoffs, one tie-break inning is played. If there is still a tie at the end of the first extra inning, sudden death will be played with a runner starting on 2nd base for each team in the subsequent innings.

OUTS, BASE RUNNING, & FIELDING

Players are considered out by the following means: (1) Striking out, (2) A fly ball caught by the defense, (3) A throw-out at one of the lead bases, (4) Being tagged with a ball that is in possession of a defensive player, (5) Fouling out, (6) Caught leading off, (7) Making contact with fielder, and (8) a runner that is touched by a batted ball in fair territory.

A player *may* also be called out for throwing a bat, even if accidentally during their at-bat. Additionally, a player may also be called out for an unsportsmanlike action during the game. In this case, the player may also be ejected from the game and the facility.

- Unsportsmanlike conduct can be taunting, excessive arguing with the umpire or league official, or vandalism of property. Players will be warned first and captains will be notified of the behavior. If it is deemed out of control the player can be ejected.

Runners may not leadoff or steal a base. Runners can leave the base once the ball is hit. If a runner leaves early, the ball is dead and the runner is declared out. If this is the third out of the inning the batter will be first up in the next inning.

Runners may tag-up on both fair and foul fly-balls that are caught for an out. A foul ball that is dropped is dead and runners may not advance.

Often, there are two bases at first base. The base in fair territory is for the fielder. The base in foul territory (sometimes orange) is for the runner. Runners may run through (and past) first base. Runners cannot run through second or third base.

Base runner to defensive player contact will be closely watched by the umpire. Any excessive contact or collision (depending on the initiator) may result in an out/safe call and/or ejection. This includes contact with the catcher. Sliding is allowed, but should not be used to break up a double play or act as interference with the defensive player. If the umpire determines the runner's slide was used in this way the runner may be called out.



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The infield fly rule is in play when there are runners on first and second base and there are less than two outs.

A ball is deemed out of play when: (1) The ball is thrown over or beyond the fence, or into the dugout, (2) The ball is thrown beyond the imaginary line extending from the end of the backstop (if there is no fence), (3) The ball becomes stuck in a tree, under a fence, etc., (4) The ball is interfered with in any way not natural to legal gameplay (stuck in team area, stolen by dog, etc.)

When the ball is deemed out of play, the base runner will be awarded one additional base.

A play is considered over where the referee calls "time" or when the runners have come to a rest and a fielder in the infield has the ball and is not attempting to make a play anywhere.

As described earlier, there may be no more than 10 players in the field, with a maximum of 7 males.

Infielders must start each play on the dirt of the infield.

Outfielders are not allowed to start a play within 30 feet of the infield dirt. (A cone or paint may denote where the 30 foot mark is.)

OTHER RULES

Where a rule is not covered above, ASA rules apply. Rulings by the game coordinator and/or umpire are final.

If you feel a clarification to the rules is necessary, please e-mail play@playnola.com.

PLAYOFFS

Playoff formats are determined by the number of teams in the league that season. The league coordinator will send out playoff details to all players during the season.

Ties in the final regular season standings are broken first by head-to-head match-ups, then by runs allowed, then by runs scored/run differential.

In playoffs games, team captains may be asked to provide line-up cards to the umpire/coordinator. Only players that are present will be listed on the card. A player that arrives late to the game will be added to the bottom of the lineup.



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For the championship game, after 70 minutes (or seven innings) extra innings procedures are applied. At that point, if the game is still tied, two normal extra innings will be played. If still tied at the end of the extra innings, each team will start the remaining innings with a runner (last out of the previous inning) on 2nd base and one out. Based on the circumstances (weather, facility timing, etc. the umpire/coordinator has the authority to alter the championship game timing/format as needed.

Substitutes are not allowed in the playoffs...unless approved by the opposing team via their captain. This must be handled before game day and the teams must notify the league coordinator. If the opposing team allows for any substitutes, the sub(s) must follow the usual sub process: waiver, form, sub fee.

LEAGUE POLICIES

RAIN OUTS:

Any games that are rained out will be rescheduled/moved to the end of the regular season. We have built in extra weeks for rain and will attempt to make up as many of these games as possible. In some situations, a non-league day may be offered in order to make-up games. However, if for any reason we cannot make up games (i.e. scheduling conflict, field availability) we do reserve the right to end the season. At that time, more details will be provided.

WAIVERS:

In order to participate in the league, each participant must sign the waiver. A participant who registers online "signs" the waiver by completing their transaction.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

The purpose of PLAYNOLA is to have fun: MEET.GREET.COMPETE. We hope that all participants keep that in mind when becoming involved. Although the games may become intense, you still can be competitive while maintaining good sportsmanship. With this said, any behavior deemed unacceptable by staff may result in suspension and/or ejection from a game or the league.

To see our code of conduct policy:

https://playnola.leaguelab.com/document/994/download/PLAYNOLA_CODE-OF-CONDUCT.pdf

FIELD DIMENSIONS



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All bases are 65 feet apart.

The distance between home plate and second base is ___ feet.

The distance between home plate and the pitcher's mound is 45 feet. The pitcher's mound intersects first/third base as well as home/second base.

An extra base may be placed next to first base, in foul territory. This is the safety base to be used by runners.

Infielders must start each play in the dirt of the infield.

Outfielders are not allowed to start a play within 30 feet of the infield dirt. (A cone or paint may denote where the 30 foot mark is.)