



ACA SOFTBALL GAME RULES

I. GENERAL RULES

- a. Players must be registered conference delegates or registered guests.
- b. All players participate at their own risk and are expected to adhere to the spirit of Fair Play (<http://www.fairplayinternational.org/fairplay/the-essence-of-fair-play#.VI8-4W74BD8>).
- c. The home team will be determined by the location of the conference.
- d. A team shall consist of a maximum of 10 defensive players. An unlimited number of players may bat. A team may compete with a minimum of 8 players (but is encouraged to try to convince players with multiple allegiances to switch sides in order to field a complete team).

II. GAME LENGTH & MERCY RULES

- a. Games are 7 innings in length. In the event of a tie, extra innings may be added if time and conditions permit.
- b. A game will be considered official if it lasts at least 5 complete innings (or 4 1/2 innings with the home team ahead).
- c. Each inning shall consist of 3 outs or a maximum of 7 runs. The team at bat must declare when the batter representing the 7th run comes to the plate. The 7th inning of a game is an open-ended inning with no cap on runs.
- d. A mercy rule is in effect after 5 innings. The losing captain may call a game any time after 5 innings if there is more than a 15 run differential. This is optional for the losing team and is not a forced mercy.

III. EQUIPMENT & OFFICIATING RULES

- a. The conference Host Team will provide bases, softballs, a catcher's mask, and bats (official softball bats of legal size, weight, and shape, conforming to the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) standard).
- b. Teams should provide enough gloves for their own players, but when required, teams may be asked to lend gloves to the opposing team when they are in the field.
- c. Each field will have its own out-of-play area. The umpire (or team captains, when no umpire is present) will establish the boundaries before the game begins. Bases should be placed 60'-65' apart.
- d. All participants must wear athletic shoes while playing. Metal cleats are not permitted.
- e. When there is an umpire present, the umpire is responsible for calling all outs and fair/foul balls.
- f. When there is no umpire available, the team at bat should provide a first base and third base umpire to call outs. In addition, the catcher should call fair/foul balls as they have the best view. The pitcher is responsible for calling outs at 2nd base and home plate.

IV. PITCHING RULES

- a. Pitcher is pitching to his/her own team and will never act as a fielder. Members may rotate pitching at any time.
- b. Batters receive 3 pitches to hit. If they fail to hit the ball fair in 3 pitches, they are out.
- c. If a batted ball hits the pitcher, it is counted as a strike. The only exception is on the third strike. A batter cannot strike out by hitting pitcher.
- d. The pitcher may not touch the ball while the defense is making a play. Balls from the outfield must go to an infielder who will return it to the pitcher when play has ceased. If the pitcher interferes with a play by the defensive team, the ball is dead and the runner nearest home plate is out.



V. OTHER RULES OF THE GAME

- a. The batting order should alternate between men and women to whatever extent possible.
- b. Free substitutions in the field may take place; this will have no impact on the batting order.
- c. Bunting or chopping the ball is not allowed. If it occurs, the batter is automatically out and all runners must return to their original base.
- d. A batter may not step on or in front of home plate when contacting the ball. If this occurs, the batter is automatically out.
- e. Runners may not leave their base until the batter makes contact with the pitch. If they leave early, the runners are automatically out.
- f. To avoid collisions, runners must tag the safety base at first base (when there is one), and cannot touch the home plate (runners must run past home plate). To get a runner out at home plate, the catcher must have the ball and one foot on home plate before the runner crosses the extended line passing from the 1st base line past home plate.
- g. A commitment line must be marked 20' from home plate on the 3rd base line. Once the base runner has passed the line he or she must continue on to home.
- h. On an over throw when the ball ends up out of play, the base runner is allowed the base they are going to plus one base. Note: Runners are not attempting a base if they are not moving when the ball is thrown out of play.
- i. Interference is an act of an offensive player or team member that hinders or prevents a defensive player from attempting to execute a play. The offensive player is declared out, the ball becomes dead, and all other runners must return to the bases they occupied at the time of the interference. If interference is committed by a runner with the obvious intent of preventing a double play, the batter-runner will be called out in addition to the runner who committed the interference.
- j. Obstruction is the act of a fielder, while not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding a batted or thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a base runner that is legally running bases. The base runners are awarded the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
- k. Infield Fly Rule is in effect.
 - i. In order to be an infield fly, the ball must be fair and must be able to be caught by an infielder (including the catcher) with minimal effort.
 - ii. Runners must be on first and second, or first, second, and third, and there must be less than two outs.
 - iii. The ball is alive and the runners may advance at their own risk (but they do not need to run).
- l. Generally, the rules of Slow-Pitch National (SPN) Canada are in effect, with the exception of any differences stated above.

http://www.slo-pitch.com/sites/slo-pitch.com/files/PDFs/2013_Rulebook_Web.pdf