

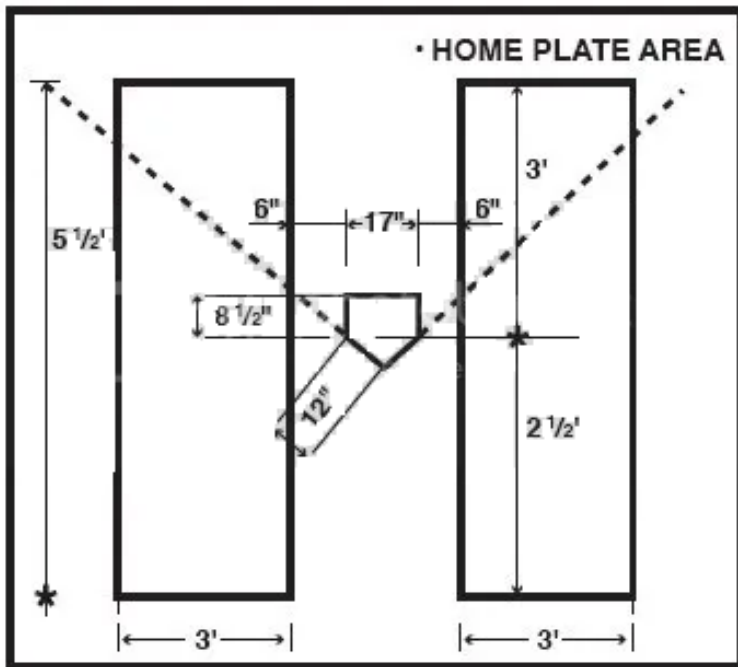
NSBF's Co-ed Slow-Pitch Softball Rules 2023



Section 1 – The Playing Field

1. The playing field is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. There shall be a clear and unobstructed area between the foul lines and within the radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate.
 - Base distance – 60 feet (18.29 meters)
 - Pitching distance – 47 feet (14.32 meters)
 - Outfielders' line – 150 feet (45.72 meters)
 - Recommended minimum outfield fence – *225 feet (68.58 meters)*
 - Recommended maximum outfield fence – *300 feet (91.44 meters)*
- 1.1 If mandatory distances are found to be at the wrong dimensions during game, correct the error with no penalty and continue playing the game.
- 1.2 Every effort should be made by the umpire to obtain the correct mandatory dimensions.

2. Batters' boxes are 3 x 5.5 foot, which is 6 inches from the side of home plate and approximately centered to the front of home plate.



Section 2 – Host Team & Grounds

1. The host team/club is responsible for ensuring that the field conditions are in order. This includes bases, home plate, back-stop at least 2 meters high x 6 meters wide, field and line markings no later than 30 minutes before the scheduled start of first game.
2. Other responsibilities required:
 - Use of safety double base at 1st base.
 - Providing approved game balls.
 - Setting up kiosk, providing toilet facilities, and score keeper facilities.
 - Scorekeeping, or arranging of score keeper(s).
 - Arranging competent “base” official(s)/umpire(s).
 - Arrange a drawing of available players for loaning to teams in need.
3. The manager (leader) of the host team shall present to the umpire any ground rules believed to be necessary upon the playing field, batted or thrown balls, or any other contingencies. The umpire shall make and enforce any special ground rules he (or she) thinks are made necessary by the ground conditions, which shall not conflict with the official playing rules.

Section 3 – Equipment/Attire

1. All players on a team shall properly wear uniforms that are like in color. Uniforms must have numbers and remain visible during game. Players without numbers will not be permitted to play. There is no penalty for a player wearing a wrong number or a duplicate number.
2. Athletic shoes are required and must be worn by all players. Metal cleats are not allowed.
3. Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game.
4. A batting helmet may be worn by an offensive player at any time.
5. Umpires are not required to inspect all players before game as it is the Team Captain's responsibility to ensure that players are in compliance with the rules. If a player is requested by the umpire to remove illegal shoes, jewelry or illegal parts of the uniform and they refuse, the player will not be allowed to play. Umpire(s) may issue an out as a penalty to team should there be delay in the game or there is no substitution at that time to make the necessary correction.
6. Each team is responsible for bringing their own team equipment necessary for each game. All equipment shall be safe or will safeguard participants or spectators from injury.
7. Bats should be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer and shall not be altered in any way that changes their characteristics.
8. Only NSBF approved 12-Inch balls will be allowed for games. It is the hosting team's responsibility to provide game balls.
9. Women are permitted to use any type of ASA-approved bat. Men are permitted to use single-wall, non-composite bats. Any other type of bat is prohibited.

The legality of a bat for men will be determined by the presence of an NSBF approval sticker. Any bat not possessing this sticker will be considered an illegal bat. The responsibility for checking a bat will be shared by the opposing coach and the home plate umpire.

The penalty for using an illegal bat is an automatic out.

Repeat infractions by the same player can result in ejection from the game. Multiple ejections from the same team can result in forfeiture of the game if the player minimums are not met. The legality of a bat must be questioned during, or immediately following an at-bat (before the first pitch to the next hitter).

It is recommended that a list of bats be submitted to NSBF for prior approval.

Section 4 Officials

1. Games must be officiated by at least one umpire. Umpires are representatives of NSBF by which they may have been assigned to a particular game or tournament and, as such, are authorized and required to enforce rules. Umpires shall have the authority to make decisions on any situations not specifically covered in these rules, and as final rulings where approved.
2. Umpires have jurisdiction over play and may suspend or call off a game due to darkness, rain, field condition, or other cause at the umpire's discretion.

Section 5 Player Eligibility & Registration

1. All players/participants must be registered on a team affiliated to NSBF and have a valid player license.
 - 1.1. From the year a player turns 16 years of age, the player can participate in Co-ed Slow Pitch Softball.
 - 1.1.1. The year a player turns 14 years of age, the player may be eligible for play.
 - 1.1.2. Eligibility is dependent upon application to, and individual assessment by, the NSBF Technical Director.
2. Teams must register for tournaments no later than two (2) weeks prior to tournament start. Teams not registered by the deadline may still be permitted to participate.
 - 2.1. Exception must be granted by NSBF, or approved by minimum 50% of softball committee members.
3. Teams may withdraw from tournaments up to three (3) days prior to the tournament start. Teams withdrawing after the deadline will be subject to penalty by NSBF.
4. Players can only participate for one (1) team throughout tournament unless player is designated to another team as a borrowed or loaned player.

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Player Eligibility & Registration

1. A preliminary team roster (PTR) consisting of minimum nine (9) players must be provided two (2) weeks prior to start of the tournament.
2. In accordance with NSBF regulations, players may be added to the final team roster (FTR) up until three (3) days prior to the start of the tournament.
 - 2.1. A player may not appear on more than one team roster.
 - 2.2. The roster may not exceed 18 players.
 - 2.3. To be eligible for a team's FTR, the player must have one (1) plate appearance (PA) or have played 1/3 of an inning on defense for that club the current season.
3. After the start of the tournament, a team, may borrow up to two (2) players per game.

Section 6 Team Requirements & Line-ups

1. A team must have the required number of players present in the dugout or team area to start or continue game.
2. Each team will have one Captain, the Team Captain will be responsible for the team.
 - 2.1. Team Captains ensure all players bat in the correct line-up order.
 - 2.2. Team Captains may request conference with the umpire to ask for clarification on a ruling, or the rules in general.
 - 2.3. Team Captains may protest a game if the umpire(s) have, in their view, applied the rules incorrect.
3. A team must defensively field at least nine players and no more than 10, and with a minimum of three (3) each gender.
 - 3.1. Should the minimum of three (3) each gender not be met, players must be borrowed.
 - 3.2. A team of 9 players present at official game time and with three (3) each gender, must begin play immediately.
 - 3.2.1. If another player or substitute arrives during the game, that player must be inserted into the vacant spot or at the bottom of the line-up to fulfill a team of ten (10) players, as long as no more than three (3) opposite gender bat in a row.

3.2.2. Teams with 9 players and without three (3) players opposite gender cannot begin a game.

3.2.3. Umpire may grant a two-minute fair warning before team will be required to forfeit the game.

4. A team may borrow a maximum of three (3) players from other teams.

4.1. Notification of the intent to borrow players should be submitted to NSBF and the host team at least three (3) days before the competition.

4.1.1. Players from teams which are *NOT* registered to play in the tournament can be borrowed.

4.1.2. Other borrowed players will be drawn from a pool of available players from teams registered to play in the tournament.

4.2. On gameday, if a player(s) is physically unable to continue playing, the affected team will be allowed to borrow additional player(s), provided that the total number of borrowed players does not exceed four (4).

4.3. A borrowed player can never take the place of a capable player in a team's line-up.

4.4. Statistic registered as a borrowed player will never be used toward any personal league award.

5. Designated Player (DP), Designated Hitter (DH), or Extra Player (EP) positions are not allowed.

5.1. All players must bat and field.

6. Line-ups

6.1. Official NSBF Line-up cards will be used and presented to Umpire plate meeting and exchanged with opposing team.

6.2. Line-ups shall contain the first and last name, defensive position, and uniform number of each player.

6.3. No more than three (3) players of the same gender bat in a row.

6.4. All available substitutes should be listed in the designated place.

6.5. Borrowed or Loaned players are to be highlighted with an "L".

6.6. Line-ups are to be completed and submitted to the umpire and official scorekeeper at least five (5) minutes before start of game, and at the plate meeting.

6.6.1. Scorekeeper may prefer line-ups sooner if possible.

6.6.2. If a wrong uniform number is on the line-up, correct it and continue playing with no penalty.

6.7. Late players, that are registered with the team, maybe added to the available substitute list.

6.7.1. Umpire and scorekeeper must be notified of late players which are added to the line-ups.

Section 7 Defensive Positions

1. All infielders must stay behind the base line until the ball is hit.
2. All outfield positions must remain behind the 150-foot (45.72 meters) Outfield Line until the ball is hit.

Any infractions to the above (1.-2.) can result an out(s) being nullified.

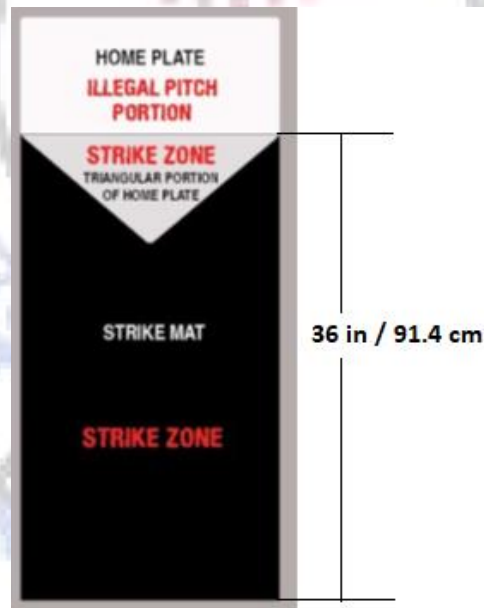
3. Opposite genders do not have to alternate defensively in the field (infield, outfield, or pitcher/catcher).
4. Outfield requires one (1) position by opposite gender.
5. Infield requires one (1) position by opposite gender.
 - 5.1 Pitcher and Catcher count as Infield position

Section 8 Pitching

1. The pitcher may be replaced on the mound/plate once per inning.
2. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's mound/plate.
3. At least one foot shall remain in contact with the mound/plate until the pitched ball leaves the hand.
4. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch until umpire calls for the pitch.
5. The pitcher must come to a full and complete stop with the ball in front of the body and must face the batter.
6. Delivery of the pitch is to be a continuous slow motion.
7. The pitcher shall deliver the ball toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip with an underhand motion and side of the body.
8. The pitcher shall not hinder or delay game time after umpire calls for the pitch.

Any infractions to the above (1.-8.) can result in the following:

- 8.1. The ball is dead.
 - 8.2. Illegal pitch, Ball is called on the batter.
 - 8.3. Warning issued to the pitcher.
9. The pitch must reach an arc of at least 6 feet in height but must not arc higher than 12 feet or it will be called an illegal pitch by the umpire.
- 9.1. If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, it is in play, but with no swing it is a called ball.
10. All At-Bats will start with a 1 ball & 1 strike count.
11. When a pitched ball is prevented from entering the strike zone by any actions of the batter other than hitting the ball, the ball will be declared dead, and a strike is issued to the batter.
12. A batter that is hit by pitch will not be awarded first base. The pitch will be called as a ball and the at-bat will continue.
13. The strike zone shall be as illustrated below:



- 13.1. Calls of strikes and balls are an umpire's judgement and cannot be disputed.
- 13.2. Strike zone mats if used must be approved before tournament use.

Section 9 The Game

1. The home team is designated on the tournament schedule, normally indicated after the “@” sign. The home team will occupy the 1st Base dugout and will bat second.
2. Game times are indicated on the schedule and will be a regulation of 55 minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first. Regulation time begins at first official pitch.
3. Games can be started before scheduled game time if both team captains agree.
4. No new innings shall be started after the 55 minutes.
5. In the event of a tied game at the end of regulation time or 7 innings, shall be continued by playing additional innings. Each team will begin their half inning with a runner on 2nd base until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning, or until the home team has scored more runs before the third out is made.
 - 5.1. Runner on 2nd base must be the last person who batted in the prior inning.
6. Official regulation time is monitored by the plate umpire.
7. If a game is suspended by the plate umpire, due to injury or environmental conditions, shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.
8. The score of a forfeited game shall be seven to zero in favor of the team not at fault.
9. Mercy/Run Ahead Rule – A run ahead rule must be used in all tournaments.
 - 9.1. 10 runs after 5 innings played
 - 9.2. 15 runs after 4 innings played
 - 9.3. 20 runs after 3 innings played
10. Home Run Rule – A limit in accordance with the “3-Up Rule” of over-the-fence home runs will be used in all tournaments.

Example: Team A hits two (2) home runs in the first inning to go +2 in home runs. Team B will be permitted to hit up to five (5) home runs without Team A hitting another home run for a total of +3.

 - 10.1. Teams may only hit a maximum of +3 home runs relative to the opponent’s home run total.
 - 10.2. Any batter that hits a home run in excess for a team that is already “3-Up” will be declared out. The ball is dead, and no runner can advance.
 - 10.3. Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player that clears or has cleared the fence in fair territory, should be declared a four (4) base award and shall not be included in the total of over the fence home runs.
11. A ball is in play until the umpire declares the play dead and will call time.

12. Leading off base and stealing are not allowed.
13. Tag Up - After a fly ball is caught, runner must touch their original base before running to the next base.
14. Runners must stay within the base path unless avoiding interference with a fielder making a play on a batted ball.
15. Runners illegally hindered by any fielder within the base path shall be safe at the base to which they are running to (determined and ruled by the umpire).
16. A runner will be called out when they remain on their feet and crash into a defensive player who is holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag.
17. Fielders must stay out of the base line if not in the act of fielding/receiving the ball.
18. Fielders attempting to make an out on a base may have their foot on base but must lean out of the baseline.
19. Catcher cannot block home plate without the ball. Runner gets priority.
20. One (1) run shall be scored when a runner touched first, second, third base and home plate. All bases must be touched in order.
21. No run shall be scored if:
 - 21.1. A batter-runner or any other runner is forced out resulting in 3rd out.
 - 21.1.1. If a 3rd out is made (non-force play) before the runner touches home plate.
 - 21.2. A preceding runner is declared out on an appeal play where the force out is determined when the appeal is made.
 - 21.3. A runner who has scored has been determined, on appeal, to have missed a base or left too early.
 - 21.3.1. Previous runners' runs count.
 - 21.3.2. Following runners may not score if third out was declared.
22. A count of three (3) outs by a team completes the half of the inning.
23. An **OUT** is the following, but may not be limited to:
 - 23.1. Any batted ball (fair or foul) that is caught before hitting the ground.
 - 23.2. A fielder catching or holding the ball and touching any part of their body on the base to which a runner is forced to run to.
 - 23.3. A runner tagged by the ball in fielder's hand or glove at any time while not on a base.
 - 23.4. A runner off the base before the pitched ball hits ground or is hit by batter.
 - 23.4.1. Dead ball will be declared by umpire immediately.

23.4.2. Result of the play does not count including a ball or strike against a batter or the result of the ball hit into play.

23.4.3. Other runners remain at their original base.

23.5. A ball is hit when the batter steps out of the batter's box whether the ball is fair or foul.

23.5.1. Dead ball will be declared by umpire immediately.

23.5.2. Other runners remain at their original base.

23.6. An intentionally bunted ball or blatant "swinging bunt" attempt.

23.7. Running out of the base path to avoid a tag.

23.8. Interfering with a fielder making a play on a batted ball, whether intentional or unintentional, as well as intentionally interfering with a defensive player at any time.

23.9. Infield Fly Rule is in effect.

24. An Intentional walk is not allowed.

25. A foul ball counts as a strike.

26. A foul ball on a third strike is normally an out.....

26.1. One (1) courtesy foul will be given. Second foul on strike three (3) will be considered a strike out.

27. Foul tip and pop-up at home plate.

27.1. If directly tipped straight back with no designated arc in the ball flight, it is a Foul/Strike.

27.2. If the ball flight has a designated arc, and the ball is caught the result is an Out.

28. Two runners may not occupy the same base at the same time.

28.1. The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to that base, unless forced to advance.

28.2. The other runner may be put out by being tagged with the ball.

Section 10 Substitutions/Injury

1. A substitution is defined as a player not currently in the game (on the bench) replacing a player that is in the game (on the field/in the batting line-up).
2. Defensive positions, other than pitcher, can freely shift or change positions if the following remains:
 - 2.1. Outfield positions must stay behind the 150' outfielders' line.
 - 2.2. Infield positions, excl. Pitcher and catcher, must stay behind the base line.
 - 2.3. The minimum number of players, genders, and defensive position requirements must be always met.
3. Reporting - Team Captain making the substitution shall notify the plate umpire at the time the substitute enters. The plate umpire shall then report the change to the score keeper.
4. Unreported – Failure to report a substitution can result in an illegal batter. An illegal batter can only be protested by the opposing team while the player in question is batting, or before the first pitch to the next batter.
5. Any player who was substituted can re-enter but must be reported to the plate umpire.
6. A courtesy runner may be used for an injured player who successfully reached base after at-bat.
 - 6.1. Courtesy runners are not considered substitutes.
 - 6.2. The courtesy runner should first come from an available substitution.
 - 6.3. If no substitution available, the courtesy runner should come from the bottom of the line-up or last available at bat.
 - 6.3.1. If courtesy runner is on base when their turn at bat comes, an out will be declared.
7. In cases of injury or illness, a time-out may be requested for player removal and replacement. If player later returns to play in same game, the player must be inserted in the same place in the batting order as previously held.
 - 7.1. An injured or ill player can be removed from the batting order and will not be charged with an Out if the following is met:
 - 7.1.1. Team minimum of nine (9) players
 - 7.1.2. Minimum of three (3) opposite gender
 - 7.1.3. No more than three (3) players of the same gender bat in a row.
8. If a player is ejected during game, an out will be declared when the player is scheduled to bat if substitute is not available.

Section 11 Dugout and Field Conduct

1. Only Defensive players, Batter, On-deck/Next batter, and Base Coaches are allowed outside the designated dugouts. Team Captain(s) is allowed on the field if for a conference with umpire and time out is called.
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct and abuse of any kind is not permitted. Abuse can be and not limited to physical, sexual, emotional, and (or) verbal misconduct.
3. With any unsportsmanlike offense or act, a warning may be issued. Any repeat offense will result in the ejection of that team player(s)/participant(s).
4. Consummation of alcoholic beverages inside the dugout or on the playing field is forbidden. Players and participants will not use alcoholic beverages in the vicinity of the playing grounds.
 - 4.1. Playing under the influence of alcohol or any other substance is not tolerated.
 - 4.2. Pending approval from the Chief Umpire, limited consumption may be permitted for celebratory purposes during medal ceremonies.

Any violations to the above will suspend game and player(s)/participant(s) will be ejected from the game, event, and area. Further action may be taken in accordance with [NSBF Tournament Rules § 1.08 - 1.11](#), and [NIF Penal Code Ch. 11](#).

§ 1.01 About Grand Slam Softball (GSS) Tournament Rules - Rules and regulations not explicitly covered in all the above, the regulations in the current NSBF Tournament Rules will determine the ruling.