



With the following exceptions, the rules of Softball as stated in the *SOFTBALL CANADA OFFICIAL GUIDE and RULE BOOK* will apply. Each team will have access to a Rule Book for reference purposes. These are available from the Division Convenors.

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1) THE PLAYING FIELD

1. After the last game of the evening during the week and after the last scheduled game on Saturday, the home team is responsible for returning the bases and the pitching rubber to the equipment storage rooms:
 - Diamond 1 to the shed behind diamond 1
 - Diamonds 2 and 3 to the shed behind diamond 2.
 Both teams should also ensure all playing equipment has been returned to the clubhouse.

<u>2. PITCHING DISTANCES**</u>	<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>BASE DISTANCES</u>	<u>BALL</u>
(1) 30 feet	U8 (5-Pitch)	45 feet	11"
(2) 30 feet	U10 Boys	45 feet	11"
(3) 30 feet	U11 Girls	45 feet	11"
(4) 35 feet	U12 Boys	55 feet	11"
(5) 38 feet	U13 Girls	55 feet	11"
(6) 42 feet	U14 Boys	60 feet	12"
(7) 40 feet	U15 Girls	60 feet	12"
(8) 43 feet	U18 Co-ed	60 feet	12"
(9) 46 feet	U23 Co-ed	60 feet	12"

2) EQUIPMENT

1. Only equipment supplied or approved by the league will be used.
2. Each equipment bag is stocked with the same type of equipment.
3. Misuse of any equipment will result in ejection from the game by the umpires.
4. All back catchers must wear full protective equipment, including an athletic support with protective cup (male and female).
5. HELMETS
 - a. Helmets must be worn on the field by the batter, on deck batter, runners, catchers, players who coach at 1st or 3rd base, and any youth age team representative who participates as a bat boy/girl or base coach. Helmets must not be removed until a player has entered the dugout. Chinstraps must be properly done up at all times.
Only approved player owned helmets labeled may be used.
 - i. Face guards must be worn on batting helmets in all divisions.



b. PLAYER OWNED HELMETS

- a. Beginning with the 2022 season, players must provide their own helmets.
- b. Player Owned helmets may only be used by the player the helmet was purchased for and may not be shared with other players.
- c. The approval requirements are as follows:
 - i. The helmet must be CSA approved for softball
 - ii. Must be clear of all decals, paint or markings
 - iii. Must have a face guard properly installed.
- d. The player/parent/guardian is responsible for the maintenance and inspection of the helmet.
- e. An approval will not be provided under the following circumstances:
 - i. If the player/parent/guardian/coach/convenor/umpire detects damage, or it is identified that the helmet is damaged or cracked in any way,
 - ii. If the face guard is not attached properly to the batting helmet nor cannot be attached in a way approved by the manufacturer.
 - iii. If non-approved modifications, markings, stickers, paint or decals are added to the helmet.

6. CATCHERS EQUIPMENT

- a. The League highly recommends that all players wear appropriate athletic support. It is solely the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child, if playing catcher, wears the proper athletic support.
- b. Players may use their own catcher's equipment if approved by the league. The equipment must be pre-approved by the league and have an approval decal affixed to the back of the catcher's helmet prior to use in the league.
- c. The approval requirements for receiving an "Approved by TPMSL" decal for Player Owned Catchers equipment are as follows:
 - i. The equipment must be CSA approved for softball
 - ii. Must be either red or black in colour
 - iii. Must be clear of all decals, paint or markings
- d. Player Owned Catchers equipment may only be used by the player the equipment was purchased for and may not be shared with other players.
- e. Players Owned Catchers equipment may just consist of the catcher's mask, with the player continuing to use the league's shin-guards and chest protectors

7. FOOTWEAR

- a. **Only** running shoes or soft rubber baseball shoes are allowed. This applies to all coaches, umpires, and players.
- b. **No** metal or hard plastic cleats/spikes, or shoes with detachable spikes/cleats are allowed.
- c. **No** open toed shoes or sandals are permitted on the playing field.
- d. Any player with illegal shoes will be called out when entering the batter's box. Refusal to remove illegal shoes will result in ejection from the game.

8. UNIFORMS



- a. If any player arrives without their complete uniform as supplied, they do not play. Convenors are to enforce this rule. All efforts will be made by the league to supply the uniforms in appropriate sizes.
- b. Uniforms must be worn properly. Shirts must be tucked in and the sleeves must not be rolled up. Convenors and umpires are to enforce these rules. Failure to wear the uniform properly will result in players being called out after they enter the batter's box. After a warning to both teams, continued abuse of the rule may result in ejections from the game. Team abuse of this rule will result in forfeit of the game.
- c. While on the field, all players and coaches must wear their uniform.
- d. Only Topham Park Softball hats may be worn (championship and select are included as Topham Park Softball hats). If the player is wearing a softball fielding or pitching mask, the hat is optional.

3) THE GAME

- a) All games are 1 1/2 hours in duration or 7 innings, whichever comes first. Games on diamond 1 on weekdays for U18 Girls and U23 are 1 3/4 hours in duration or 7 innings, whichever comes first. **The timepiece of the home plate umpire determines all game times.**
- b) No new inning starts with 15 minutes left in the scheduled time for the game.
- c) All half innings will end after 5 runs have been scored (mercy rule) except for the following situations:
Innings starting in the last 30 minutes of the scheduled time of the game will be **open**, and, once the 7th inning is started, it will also be **open**.
- d) A game may be terminated early in the event of a lopsided score on the agreement of both head coaches.
- e) All games are subject to default 10 (ten) minutes after the start time. Games called due to rain or dangerous conditions will be considered complete if five (5) innings, *or* 4^{1/2} innings if the home team is leading, are completed. When a game is called on the time factor, the score at the completion of the last full inning will be the final score of the game. Incomplete games because of weather will be considered a Rainout.
- f) **Rainouts:** Each team will be awarded one (1) point. The Home team uses the dugout on the 3rd base side. The Visiting team uses the dugout on the 1st base side.
- g) The Home team uses the dugout on the 3rd base side. The Visiting team uses the dugout on the 1st base side.
- h) For the U10 Boys and U11 Girls Divisions only: A team is allowed to start with 10 players, having four (4) players playing the outfield. **This may only occur if BOTH teams have a minimum of 10 players each.**
- i) PLAYER CALL UPS AND PARTICIPATION
 - i) Players may be called up with the intent to make a team of ten (10) players maximum.
 - ii) Once a player is called up, they must play in the game regardless of how many players show up.
 - iii) All players will be in the batting order for the full game (this includes called-up players).
 - iv) Only players present shall appear on the score sheet. Late arrivals can be added at the bottom of the batting order **only** if the team has not yet completed one complete batting order.



- v) When more than 9 players are present, no player shall be assigned the bench position again, until all players have been assigned that position. All players must receive equal playing time.
Call up players must play defensively in the first inning.
- vi) If a player is ejected from the game by an umpire, his or her name will be stricken from the scorekeeper's batting order. This shall not be an automatic out unless the ejection results in there being less than 9 players remaining.
- vii) Call ups must be coordinated by the division convenor or designate. No team may use the same call up player for more than 3 games (including playoffs). An exception may be made to this rule if approved by the Division Convenor and Head Convenor.
- viii) Call ups used as pitchers must follow the innings pitched rules of the division that they are called up from.
- ix) The coaches are to ensure call-ups are clearly identified on the scoresheet.
- x) Call ups are to wear the uniform of their assigned house league team.

j) **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- i) Any player missing five (5) games during the regular season will not be eligible to play in the playoffs. (Exception: Medical reasons An exception may be made to this rule if approved by the Division Convenor to another TPMSL Convenor without a child/relative in the impacted Division.
- ii) Any player missing three (3) consecutive games can be replaced at the discretion of the Coaches and Convenors. (Exception: Medical reasons. A Doctor's note may be requested)
- iii) A team may play with eight players, but when the absent player's turn at bat occurs, it will be recorded as an out. An inning cannot end on this type of out; that out shall be carried over to the next inning as the 1st out of the inning.

k) **PLAYERS ARRIVING LATE MAY JOIN THE GAME:**

- i) prior to the first pitch of the first half of the 3rd inning. Player will be added to the bottom of the batting order.

l) **TRADES AND BALANCING TEAMS**

- i) All players are eligible to be traded. Children of Team Sponsors are the only exception.
- ii) For the purpose of team balancing, any player can be traded up to the end of the 2nd week of play at the discretion of the Division Convenor. This deadline may be extended under exceptional circumstances and only with the permission of the President and Head Convenor.

m) **PROTESTS**

- i) The plate umpire must be notified the game is being played under protest before the next pitch is thrown. A written protest must be submitted to the Umpire-In-Chief within 48 hours of the start of the game. His decision will be binding and final.

2) **PITCHING**

- a) Topham Park Minor Softball League follows the pitching rules as outlined by Softball Canada. If clarification of permitted pitching techniques is required, please consult with the Umpire, Division Convenor, or Head Convenor.



- b) U10 Boys, U11 Girls, U12 Boys, U13 Girls, U14 Boys, U15 Girls and U18 Coed: During the regular season, a pitcher can only pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game, and never more than 2 consecutive innings.
- c) U23 Co-Ed: During the regular season, a pitcher may not pitch more than 4 innings in a game and no more than 2 innings consecutively. This rule may be changed at the discretion of the Division Convenor and Head Convenor.

** One (1) pitch constitutes an inning.

Additional Points:

- a. The pitching circle rule will be enforced.
- b. Head and face protection requirements by division:
 - ➔ U8, U10B, U11G, U12B - full helmet with cage required
 - ➔ U13G, U14B, U15G, U18Co-ed - face covering required, either mask/shield or full helmet with cage
 - ➔ U23 - face covering strongly recommended but not mandatory
- c. ILLEGAL PITCHES
 - (a) U10 Boys and U11 Girls will be given two weeks grace (1st & 2nd weeks of the season) where they will be warned about illegal pitches but not penalized (the pitch will be considered a “no pitch”).
 - (b) Divisions above U11 will be given two weeks grace where there will be one warning per game which will not result in a penalty. Both teams will be warned on the first illegal pitch. Following that, any illegal pitches by either team after the warning will be penalized.
 - (c) Commencing the 2nd Monday of the season, no warnings will be issued in any division and all illegal pitches will be penalized (no pitch and all base runners advance one base).
- d. The dropped third strike rule will be used only in U14 Boys, U15G, U18 and U23 divisions.

3) OFFENSE

- a. BASE STEALING
 - i. U10 Boys, U11 Girls and U12 Boys: When the pitched ball crosses the plate.
 - ii. All other divisions: When the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand.
 - iii. U10 Boys, U11 Girls and U12 Boys: runners are not allowed to steal home. They can only score on a hit, a caught fair or foul fly ball, or if forced by a base on balls or batter hit by pitch.
 - iv. U10 Boys, U11 Girls and U12 Boys: On a walk, a player may only advance to first base. They cannot steal second.
- b. All players and coaches, except the batter, on deck batter, runners, and 1st & 3rd base coaches, must be in the dugout and behind the screens. On diamonds 1 & 2, the entrance to the dugout is not considered to be “in” the dugout. After one warning per game, the batter will be called out and the offending coach may be ejected.
- c. The infield fly rule will be used throughout all divisions U13 and above. It will not apply in U8, U10, U11 or U12.
- d. There is no award of bases for an overthrow on Diamond 3.



- e. **DOUBLE BASE** - The batter-runner must touch the orange bag when a play is made to first base. If the runner steps on both the white and orange bags, the runner is safe if the runner beats the ball. Similarly, if the fielder steps on both the white and orange bags, it is an out if the ball beats the runner.
- f. **Courtesy Runner:** in the event a player is able to hit but unable to run due to injury, a courtesy runner may be used once the batter has reached first. The courtesy runner must be the player furthest away in the batting order. It is the responsibility of the injured player's coach to ask the home plate umpire and opposing coach for permission to use the courtesy runner prior to the first pitch being thrown. An injured batter must stop at first base in all instances for a courtesy runner to be inserted. If a player is injured during the game but is able to hit, the same rule may be implemented. The coach should inform the plate umpire and opposing coach prior to the injured runners next turn at bat.
- g. A ground rule double will be awarded if a legally hit fair ball, while still on the fly, hits a tree or light pole in fair territory. All base runners will be awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- h. A ground rule double will be awarded if a legally hit fair ball hits an individual or is touched by an individual not legally entitled to be on the field of play. All base runners will be awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

4) **PLAYOFFS**

- a) **TIE BREAKER** - If at the end of the regular season there is a TIE in the team standings. The team position in the standing will be decided by the following steps:
 - a. If 2 teams are tied:
 - i. Head to head record
 - ii. Most total wins
 - iii. Largest fraction according to total runs scored/ total runs against plus total runs scored
 - iv. Flip of a coin
 - b. If more than 2 teams are tied:
 - i. Most total wins
 - ii. Largest fraction according to total runs scored/ total runs against plus total runs scored
 - iii. Flip of a coin
- Note: a rain-out is scored as a 0-0 tie. A forfeit is scored as a 5-0 for the team that did not forfeit.
- b) **Game duration** – all regular rules apply except:
 - a. Non-Finals: all games are 2 hours in duration. Any inning started must be completed, if visiting team is ahead after their at bat.
 - b. Finals: full 7 inning game for all divisions except U10 Boys, U11 Girls and U12 Boys. In those divisions, game duration is 2 hours but any inning started must be completed.
 - c. In the case of a tie, the International Tie Breaker rule applies: The last batter of the preceding inning goes to 2nd base with none out.
 - d. Awards will only be permitted on the field if time permits. They should be moved off the field if it delays the start of the next game.
- c) If the game goes to extra innings:
 - a. All pitchers are eligible to pitch, even if they have hit the maximum number of innings pitched in the first 7 innings.
 - b. A pitcher is not allowed to pitch consecutive innings. If a pitcher pitches any part of an inning, they are not allowed to pitch the next inning.



- c. There is no maximum number of innings that a pitcher can pitch
- d) In every playoff game, the higher ranked team in the regular season is the home team.

5) CONDUCT AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- a) Any batter who throws their bat may be called out or ejected from the game. The batter may be given one warning at the discretion of the umpire, but a second occurrence will result in the batter being called out. This rule is to be strictly enforced by the umpires. If deemed deliberate (by the umpire), the batter will be called out and immediately ejected from the game without warning. A suspension may follow.
- b) Foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct will result in immediate ejection from the game and the park and may lead to ejection from the league. League officials have the right to suspend offending players for additional games if deemed appropriate by the official. League ejection must be ruled upon by a meeting of the League Executive and their decision will be final (Constitution bylaw 2.3).
- c) Players, coaches, managers, or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators, or commit other acts which could be considered to be un-sportsmanlike conduct. Failure to act in a sportsmanlike manner could result in ejection from the game and the park. Persons not complying with an umpires ruling could warrant forfeiture of the game. A forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire in favour of the team not at fault. (O.A.S.A. Rule Book; forfeited game)
- d) All coaches have the right to bench insubordinate players for the duration of the game. i.e. Refusal to play a given position, poor sportsmanship, deliberately refusing to show up for a game. Coaches must notify the Convenor when doing so.
- e) No smoking of any kind is allowed anywhere in the park. This includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, electronic cigarettes, vaporizers and cannabis.
- f) The use of alcohol or any intoxicant prior to, during or after a game is strictly prohibited. This extends to usage at the Park outside of a game situation if involving players (e.g. practices, clinics, etc.). Players, coaches, volunteers and families of players are expected to respect this policy.
- g) Any player interfering with the Scorekeeper will be ejected from the game. The score will be relayed (if requested) from the Scorekeeper to the coach at the end of every half inning.
- h) If a player is ejected (re: conduct Rule 2) from a playoff game, he or she will not be allowed to accept their trophy with the team. They will be given their trophy after their team leaves the diamond.
- i) Any ejection or contravention of the Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee and penalties may be applied.

6) GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Show respect to all players, coaching staff, Convenors, League Executive, and Officials.
- Show respect not only to your teammates, but also to all opponents.



- Comply with ZERO tolerance. Any acts deemed a deliberate attempt to intimidate, injure, damage or destroy personal or public property or equipment, will NOT be tolerated.
- Play Softball to have FUN!
- Follow all the rules of softball and play in the spirit of the game.
- Never be under the influence of a foreign substance (alcohol or drugs) before, during, or after a game or practice.
- Attend all scheduled games, practices, and training sessions.
- Make all payments of fees for team commitments on time as prescribed by the league.
- Conduct yourself in the manner in which you wish to be treated.