

Softball Rulebook Table of Contents

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I. DIVISION SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Amateur Softball Association Rules shall govern play except for differences noted in this packet.

- A. BALLS:** The City of Clermont will furnish game balls that will be approved by the game umpires prior to each league game. A.S.A. approved 12 inch .44 core balls with a 375 max compression or a 12 inch .47 core with a 375 max compression will be the official game allowed balls for all leagues. Any team can purchase game ball/s at the field for \$5 per ball.
- B. BATS:** The City of Clermont has chosen to implement the ASA and ISA Bat regulations for our league play at this time based on safety and risk management. This means all ASA and ISA approved bats will be allowed. This list will be posted at the field and is available to all coaches during each season. Updates will be distributed as the list changes. Teams are instructed to have all bats ready for inspection by umpires prior to each game if requested. Any bat that is not disclosed at the beginning of the game to the umpire and/or league official is not an eligible bat for that game. Do not hide bats in bat bags or put bats away, they must be declared at the beginning of the game and stay in play throughout the game. Wooden bats will not be allowed.

Altered bats are bats, which have 1. Had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means, 2. Had the plug removed/replaced or changed in any way 3. Had the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way, or 4. Had anything removed or added to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob. Cracked, worn (paint/lettering wear is not a problem so long as the bat can be identified and has the appropriate BPF marking, but any wearing of the bat material or identifying paint or BPF wear will be cause for removal) or damaged bats are not altered bats, but will also be removed from play. Such cracked, worn or damaged bats will not result in a player suspension, unless the player returns the offending bat into league play after it has been removed or the bat is also altered.

- C. CANCELLATION FEE:** There will be NO refunds upon withdraw from a league once the season officially starts (week all league play begins.)
- D. CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (TEAMS):** Players can NOT play on 2 teams in the same league. The ASA player rating system is in place to create a fair and level playing field for all of our teams. The guidelines for classification area as follows:

Men's C Slow Pitch Three (3) B classified players may play and no players from Class A or restricted players list may play.

Men's D Slow Pitch Three (3) C classified players may play and no players from Class A, Class B or restricted players list may play.

Coed Slow Pitch No Open classified female players and no male classified players from Class A, Class B or the ASA restricted players list.

- E. EJECTIONS:** (1) Either umpire may eject a player from the field for using indecent language, unsportsmanlike conduct or a serious violation of the rules. In case of ejection, the umpire shall notify the manager or coach that the ejected player must leave the facility within one minute or the game will be forfeited. The manager shall be the spokesperson for their respective team.

An ejection letter detailing the penalty will be mailed to the manager. For faster notification, managers are encouraged to call the Parks and Recreation office at 352-241-7352 regarding the penalty and then notify the player of the penalty after the ejection. The City of Clermont will NOT notify the player.

- (2) Players are automatically suspended or reprimanded from the date of ejection.
- (3) Suspensions can only be appealed in writing before the teams next scheduled game. Appeals are to be sent to the Recreation Department.
- (4) **ALL PENALTIES ARE MINIMUM AND IF DEEMED NECESSARY, GREATER PENALTIES MAY BE IMPOSED.**
- (5) If while on probation, a player commits an infraction of the rules, he/she will be placed on suspension for the appropriate time period determined by the City of Clermont.

a. Major Offense

1. Physically attacking an official in any manner.
Penalty: Minimum 2 years suspension & 2 years probation depending on severity of attack.
2. Deliberate act that causes bodily harm to another player or property
(i.e. Starting a fight or physically attacking an individual).
Penalty: Minimum 1 year suspension & 1 year probation.
3. Threatening an official or park employee with physical harm.
Penalty: Minimum 1 year suspension & 1 year probation.

b. Minor Offense

1. Act of Fraud (ex. Playing a player under an assumed name).
Penalty: Minimum 1 year suspension & 1 year probation for both illegal player and manager.
2. Any player or manager guilty of using profane language or throwing equipment.
Penalty: Minimum 1 game suspension.
3. Any unsportsmanlike conduct such as failure of a manager or player to control emotions.
Penalty: Minimum 1 game suspension.

F. LINEUPS

Teams in all classifications will have a choice of batting a traditional lineup or a “bat-the-bench” lineup. Choice must be declared prior to the game and reflected properly on the lineup card submitted to the scorekeeper. Teams will not be allowed to change options during the course of a game.

Traditional Lineup: The regulation number for slow pitch is 10, with the option to use 11 players. In all men’s/women’s divisions a team may begin with 9 players. If a 10th player arrives, he/she shall enter the lineup in the vacant 10th position. **ELEVEN PLAYER LINEUP (EXTRA HITTER):** Teams will be permitted to insert 11 of their players if using the traditional lineup. The 11th player **MUST** be physically present. This is an optional rule. If a team wishes to do this, it must be done from the start of the game. Once the game starts, teams **CANNOT** go from a 10 player lineup to the 11 player lineup. Once the lineup has been recorded in the scorebook, it **WILL NOT** be changed. The penalty for turning in a player’s name that is not present will be an out each time that player is to bat. If you start the game with 11 players in the lineup and you have to finish with 10, the penalty will be an out each time that missing player is to bat. If a team uses the 11 player batting lineup, any 10 of the starting 11 may play defense at anytime. Any player may be withdrawn and reentered **ONCE**, provided that player occupies the same batting position.

“Bat-The-Bench” Lineup: In this lineup, all players present are placed in the lineup with a maximum of 20 players. Any 10 of those players can play defense at any time. Since all players bat, no substitutions can be made to the lineup. Any player that arrives late can be added to the bottom of the lineup. Players may be dropped from the batting lineup without penalty unless the number of players drops to 9. When a player is removed from the lineup, names will shift up on the lineup. Exception: If a player is ejected for any reason, the lineup will NOT shift up and each time that space comes to bat, an out will be accessed to the team. Once dropped from the lineup a player can not return. If an injured player wishes to stay in the game, but skip an at bat, an out will be called. If the number of players drops below the regulation number (9), then a forfeit will be declared.

If at 5 minutes before game time, a team cannot field a full team, a lineup of present players in consecutive order must be turned in. Late arrivals will be added to the end of the lineup up to the 10th spot. Any players that arrive after that 10th spot is filled can enter the game as a substitute.

G. ELIGIBILITY (PLAYER) - ROSTER & INDIVIDUAL SHEETS

Each player must be written on the ASA team roster with his/her signature on the sheet. If rosters and individual sheets are not signed or are missing proper information, they will NOT be accepted!! Additions to the roster may not be made over the telephone or by mail.

****Only 3 players from the Men’s “C” League are permitted to be on the roster of a Men’s “D” League Team. No Exceptions!!!****

H. FORFEIT:

- (1) A team must have a minimum of 9 eligible players on the field or in the dugout to start and continue a game. **EXCEPTION:** A team may play with 8 due to an injury once the game starts. Teams are allowed ONE (1) GUEST PLAYER per game ONLY to avoid a forfeit. Guest player can only be the ninth or tenth player on the roster. All guest players must complete an individual waiver for the City. Guest players cannot come from the same division league. (i.e. Men’s D to Men’s D) The result of an illegal player will be a team forfeit.

FORFEIT TIMES ARE:

GAME 1 6:40 p.m. Clock starts at 6:30 p.m.

GAME 2 7:30 p.m.

GAME 3 8:30 p.m.

The field coordinator will have the official game clock and determine forfeit times. The second and third games may start before scheduled game times if agreed to by both managers and umpires.

- (2) In case a game is forfeited, the teams may play a practice game by picking up extra players. Practice games **MUST** end 5 minutes before the next scheduled game. Umpires will not officiate these games. If a team forfeits 2 or more games during the current season, the team may be dropped from the league and may not be allowed to participate in future city leagues.

I. GAME (REGULATION)

- (1) In all leagues, games are scheduled for 7 innings unless stopped by run rule, time limit, weather or extended by extra innings.
- (2) The **RUN AHEAD MARGIN** for all leagues is as follows:
20 (TWENTY) = After the 3rd inning, HOME TEAM will bat if needed.
15 (FIFTEEN) = After 4th inning, HOME TEAM will bat if needed.
- (3) If at the end of regulation play (1 hour or 7 innings) a game is tied, the “One Pitch” rule will be in effect until a winner is determined.

- (4) It is the responsibility of the manager and his/her team to maintain a team equal to the caliber of the league in which they are participating and to field a full team with sufficient substitutes available to insure a team against the necessity of having to finish a game with less than 10 players or forfeiting.
- (5) There will be no warm up pitches between innings or infield warm up after the First inning.
- (6) The 3 ball, 2 strike count (1 and 1) will be used in all leagues. The batter is out if he/she hits another foul ball after two strikes.

J. HOME RUN RULE: Limits and penalties for excess are listed below.

Class "C", Class "D", Coed = 3 (Three) plus "one-up". Excess being ruled singles with runners advancing one base only.

If both teams have reached the limit of home runs, either team is allowed to hit an additional home run, to go one home run ahead of the opposing team.

**This can continue throughout the game until the bottom of the 7th inning. The home team can only equal the number of home runs by the visitors (in excess of three) in this inning. If neither team has hit three home runs by the bottom of the 7th, the home team can hit their third.

**Note: An inside the park home run or a fair fly ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory are excluded from this rule.

**Batters only have to touch first base after hitting a home run and all runners touch the next base.

K. COURTESY RUNNERS

In the spirit of sportsmanship, courtesy runners are allowed. Courtesy runners may only be granted if the batter-runner is on base. The last out (of the same gender in coed) of the batting team shall be the courtesy runner. If the batter comes up a second time runner comes up unless that runner is not available then it would be the second last out.

L. INELIGIBLE PLAYER

- (1) Positive ID may be requested of every player at every game.
- (2) Upon discovery that an ineligible player was used, all games that the player participated in will be forfeited. Managers will be held responsible for playing only players who have been certified as eligible. The scorekeeper is instructed NOT to enter any ineligible player at any time for any reason. If an ineligible player is inadvertently allowed to play, the manager is still responsible for the consequences.
- (3) Playing a player under an assumed name shall carry a 1 year suspension and 1 year probation for both the illegal player and manager!!

M. INSURANCE: The manager shall advise each player upon signing a ROSTER/RELEASE OF LIABILITY SHEET that accident insurance is NOT provided and that the player participates in the league at his/her own risk. EACH PLAYER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS/HER OWN INSURANCE. Team insurance is available for purchase through Central Florida A.S.A.

N. PROTESTS: A written protest must be in the recreation office at City Hall or given to a league representative within 24 hours. **NOTICE OF INTENT TO PROTEST MUST BE MADE TO THE UMPIRE & SCOREKEEPER AT THE TIME THE PLAY OCCURS BEFORE THE NEXT PITCH (LEGAL or ILLEGAL) IS THROWN.** The umpire is instructed to change the decision if the opposing manager concedes the point and not permit the protest. If the protest is made, the umpire shall notify both managers that the game is being played under protest. Judgment calls CAN NOT be protested. Forms will be available at the field.

O. RAIN-OUT PROCEDURE & SUSPENDED GAMES

- (1) Field officials will make the final decision about canceling games. Please contact the Parks and Recreation office at 352-241-7352 8am - 5pm Monday - Friday, 352-516-8018 after hours.
- (2) Teams playing the second and third games are instructed to report to the game site unless otherwise notified.
- (3) Games that are rained out will be played the week following the end of the regular season schedule on the night the team normally plays. **HOWEVER, THE CITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RESCHEDULE A RAIN OUT GAME ANYTIME DEEMED NECESSARY.** When possible, managers will be notified of rainouts.
- (4) All suspended games will be resumed at the point in which they were stopped. That moment in time will be recorded in the scorebook and the game will resume as if it never stopped. Only players on the roster at the time of suspension will be allowed to participate in the resumption of the suspended game.
- (5) A complete game is 4 ½ or 5 innings.
- (6) If necessary the City has the right to shorten the season do to weather conditions.

P. ROSTER (TEAM)

- (1) A maximum of 20 players may be on a team roster.
- (2) The last day to add a player in the Spring & Fall seasons is at the end of the **Fifth (5) SCHEDULED week**. The Polar season deadline for adding players is at the end of the **Fourth (4) SCHEDULED week**.

Q. SHOES: Metal spikes, shoes with detachable cleats, or hard plastic similar to metal sole and heel, will **NOT** be allowed in any division or level of play.

R. TIE BREAKER PROCEDURES: In all leagues, the head-to-head record will be used as the tie breaker system. (Head-to-Head: Only the “runs for” between the two teams that are tied. **NOT ALL THE RUNS FOR THE WHOLE SEASON.**) If there is a tie between two or more teams the head-to-head rule will be in effect. The team with the most runs scored in the head-to-head matchup will be declared the winner. If there is a forfeit between one of those teams, that team will automatically be removed of their position for the chance to win 1st or 2nd place. If there is a tie between two teams or more but those teams have not played each other during the regular season the total of runs scored during the entire season will be used as the tie breaker.

S. TIME LIMIT RULE: All games must complete either 4 ½ or 5 innings regardless of time (unless the run rule comes into effect). In the case of a tie game, extra innings will be played to complete the game that night. In the first extra time inning there are no outs and one runner on second with 1 pitch per batter. If still tied, the second inning extra will have two outs and one runner on second using 1 pitch per batter. Otherwise, no new inning will start after **1 HOUR** of playing time (scorekeeper’s watch). Any inning started before the time limit expires will be completed properly (depending on whether the home or visiting team is ahead) regardless of time.

T. TRANSFER (PLAYER): A player transferring from one team to another must secure a release from his/her manager. If a manager refuses to release a player, the player may appeal in writing to the Recreation Department. **ONE (1) TRANSFER IS ALLOWED PER PLAYER DURING THE SEASON- NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

U. PLAYOFF: The top four ranked teams in the D league and the second four teams ranked (5 – 8) will be in a playoff for Champion of the “D” league. In the case that teams have the same record a tie breaker system will determine post season seeding. There will be a playoff for the top four ranked teams in the COED League.
(Playoff dates are subject to change depending on season weather conditions and rain outs.)

II. UNIFORMS

All teams should have similar color matching shirts with numbers on them. A number of contrasting color at least 6 inches should be worn on the back of all uniforms in an upright manner. No player on the same team should wear identical numbers (3 and 03 are examples of identical numbers). Uniforms should not have numbers over 2 digits. We would request that teams would be in uniform by the beginning of the 4th week of scheduled play.

III. PARK RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** Alcoholic beverages are NOT allowed at any city facility. **THIS INCLUDES PARKING LOTS!** Absolutely NO alcoholic beverages allowed in the dugouts!
- B. PETS:** Pets are not allowed at any of our softball facilities or in the spectator areas.
- C. SMOKING:** Ballplayers, managers and umpires will NOT be allowed to smoke on the fields or in the dugouts.

IV. COED ONLY SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

- (1) Teams must have a minimum of eight [8] players to start and complete a game. Teams may have (5 females and 5 males), (5 females and 4 males), (4 females and 5 males), (5 females and 6 males), (6 females and 4 males), (7 females and 3 males), (4 females and 4 males), (6 females and 6 males), (6 females and 5 males), (5 females and 3 males), (7 females and 5 males), (7 females and 4 males), (6 females and 7 males), (7 females and 6 males), (8 females and 5 males), (7 females and 7 males), (8 females and 6 males) and (9 females and 5 males). **NO OTHER COMBINATIONS!!**
If you have more males than females, each time the missing female should come to bat, there will be an automatic out.
- (2) 12 inch softballs will be used in league play.
- (3) Each team has the option of batting up to 14 batters, alternating male-female.
- (4) There will be 2 men and 2 women in the outfield and 2 men and 2 women in the infield. The pitcher and catcher are NOT considered as infield positions and must be male and female. This rule applies except when only 3 or 4 men are present. With 3 men present, the men must be placed as an outfielder, infielder, and either pitcher or catcher. With 4 males or females, same as above applies and the 4th male or female must play infield or outfield.
- (5) Any walk to a male batter will result in a 2 base award. The next batter (a female) will bat. **EXCEPTION:** With 2 outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat. (Women and Men start with a one and one count when they come up to bat.)
- (6) 200 ft. Rule: All outfielders must be behind the 200 ft. Line and remain there until contact is made with the ball.
- (7) All infielders must be positioned on the clay until contact is made with the ball.
- (8) Penalties for violation of rule 7 & 8: If in the umpire's judgment, a player violates these rules, the batter has the option of either taking the result of the play or being awarded first base.
- (9) Plays at Home Plate: All runners must make every attempt to avoid contact with the catcher. If contact is made and in the umpires opinion it was not accidental or no attempt to avoid the contact was made, then the runner shall be ejected from the game.
- (10) This season an extra home plate will be used for Coed games.

Extra Home Plate Rules

- 1. Defensive players can touch only the original home plate and runners can touch only the second home plate.
- 2. Runners must touch the second home plate located adjacent to the right-handed batters box in order to be safe at home.
- 3. Runners that have passed the commitment line and tagged by a defensive player will not be out.
- 4. Should a defensive player touch the second home plate and still touch the original home plate before the runner reaches the second home plate the runner is out.
- 5. If the runner touches the original home plate, the runner is out and the ball remains live.

6. Once a runner passes the commitment line, 20ft, marking from a second home plate, the runner cannot return to third base. **EFFECT:** The runner is called out if the runner returns, and the ball remains live.
7. If the runner has passed the commitment line, 20 ft marking, and continues running on the original foul line, and interferes with the fielder taking a throw at or in contact with the original home plate: **EFFECT:** A dead ball shall be declared and the runner is out.

A base runner who has passed, and tagged, third base may return to that base unless his/her foot touches the ground on or beyond the commitment line. He/she is now “committed to home” and may not re-cross the commitment line in the direction of third base. Violations will result in the base runner being called out.

In order to score, a base runner must tag the second home plate before a defensive player in possession of the ball touches home plate. To get a runner who is “committed to home” out, a defensive player must touch home plate while in possession of the ball before that runner tags the extra home plate. He or she must touch home plate; not the base runner. Contact with a base runner, which is committed to home, by any defensive player may result in an “obstruction call” by the umpire in which case the runner will be awarded home plate.

The City of Clermont reserves the right to modify the league, any rules, schedules or team rosters as needed at any time. We also reserve the right to place all teams in leagues with appropriate skill levels. Teams will be placed up a division or down a division based upon their performance if deemed necessary for the betterment of each league.

Plays, Rules or Situations that occur that are not in this rulebook will be handled on a case to case basis at the field by staff members and designees. All parties will meet and decide the best way to interpret and implement during the situation. After this has occurred, a rules modification will be distributed if necessary.