

NASA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL RULES  
(Last revision 06-24-2013)

The playing rules of the NASA Softball Association are the Official Rules of Softball as adopted by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) with the following changes.

Rule 3: EQUIPMENT. Delete the portions of Rule 3 concerning gloves, shoes, and uniforms and replace with the following: No shoes with metal to ground contact are allowed.

All men batters shall use a 12-inch ball, women batters shall have the option of using a 12-inch ball or an 11-inch ball. All teams must have a playable 11-inch ball available.

Rule 4: PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES. Delete all of Rule 4 and replace with the NASA Softball Association Players and Substitutes Rules as follows:

Definitions: Each player currently occupying a slot in the offensive lineup is designated an "active player". Other players on the team are designated "non-active players". A non-active player who was formally an active player but was removed from the lineup is designated a "deactivated player".

4-1 There is no upper limit on the number of active players.

4-2 The ten defensive positions that are allowed can be filled only by active players and can be interchanged amongst these players at any time.

4-3 A non-active player can be activated either by creating a new slot in the lineup or by substituting for an active player. However, a player who had been previously deactivated can be reactivated only if two complete innings have elapsed and only if at least nine other at-bats are between his previous at-bat and his coming at-bat.

4-4 If a player is deactivated without a substitute his slot in the lineup becomes vacant. The manager must announce when this occurs, or the rules for batting out of order will be applied when the turn at-bat of the deactivated player is skipped.

4-6 The home team cannot have a smaller number of active players in the bottom half of an inning than it had defensive positions in the top half of the inning. Result: The rules for batting out of order will be applied when the turn at-bat of the deactivated player is skipped.

4-7 The visiting team cannot fill a larger number of defensive positions than it had active players in the top half of the inning. Exception: Any player arriving late at the field may be activated and inserted into the game immediately.

4-8 A team with 9 or more defensive players will provide its own catcher if requested by the opposing team. A team with less than 9 defensive players that requests a "courtesy

catcher" will be provided one by the opposing team. The only function of the courtesy catcher is to protect the umpire (i.e., return dead balls to the pitcher). His presence will be treated as having no effect on play unless he intentionally interferes with a defensive player. The courtesy catcher is required only during play and is not required to warm up the pitcher.

4-9 A "courtesy runner" is an active player who replaces a base-runner. If the original base-runner is to remain an active player, he can be replaced by a courtesy runner only with the approval of the opposing team. If however he is to be deactivated without a substitute, no approval is required. If a courtesy runner is on base when it is his turn to bat, an alternate courtesy runner must be chosen to replace him on base. In all cases, courtesy runners are to be chosen by the opposing team. (Note that a "pinch-runner" is not a courtesy runner – a pinch runner is a non-active player who is activated when he substitutes for a base-runner who then becomes a deactivated player.)

4-10 Start times for games will be 5:15 for early games and 6:30 for late games. Teams can no longer request a delay and will forfeit the game if they do not have at least 6 players at any time after the start time. The score of a forfeited game can be chosen by the non-forfeiting manager to be the score at the time of the forfeit, or 7-0, or 7-7.

4-11 Persons of the opposite sex sharing living quarters and in a significant relationship (POSSLQ) rule:

A person may participate as a regular rostered player on only one team if said person is a boyfriend/girlfriend (in a significant relationship) of a NASA Langley employee/contractor who cannot legally be claimed as a spouse, but still shares the same address of residency.

A person cannot participate as a regular rostered player if said player is not a boyfriend/girlfriend in a significant relationship with a NASA Langley employee/contractor, but is merely a roommate who shares the same address.

Rule 5: THE GAME. Delete the sections on home run classification and run ahead rule and replace with the following: Any run scored that results in a run differential greater than 15 will not count. Hence a team must give up its turn at-bat whenever its run total exceeds that of its opponent by 15 runs. Also, a team may choose to give up its turn at-bat any time it desires. Whenever a team gives up its turn at-bat the game will proceed as if the third out of that half-inning has been made.

Rule 7: BATTING. Delete all references to foul ball third strikes and replace with the following: A third strike is called on a foul ball when it is a foul tip caught by the catcher with two strikes or when it is the second foul ball after two strikes. In the case of a third strike the ball is dead and runners cannot advance even if it is a foul fly ball that is caught.

In addition to the above changes to the ASA rulebook, the following ground rules apply.

1. A fly ball contacting any portion of a tree overhanging a foul line such that its trajectory is altered by the contact (from the umpire's viewpoint) is a dead ball. It is a foul ball strike if contact occurs over foul territory, and a no-pitch if contact occurs over fair territory. Any ball not near a foul line whose trajectory is altered by contact with a tree or other foreign object is in play and is not out even if caught before touching the ground. Any ball whose trajectory is not altered by contact is in play and no contact is assumed to have taken place. It is an out if caught before touching the ground.

2. A fair batted ball (touched or not) entering the following dead ball areas is a home run:
- (a) One batted from Field 1 that crosses the line segment between the Field 2 backstop and the Field 2 gazebo.
  - (b) One entering the ditch beyond the outfield on Field 2.
  - (c) One passing on the fly over the outfield fence in fair territory on Field 2.

A ball caught by a fielder while he is in any of the above dead ball areas is also a home run. However, if the fielder catches a fly ball before entering the dead ball area, the batter is out, and the rule for carrying a live ball into dead ball territory applies. Any other untouched fair batted ball entering out-of-bounds is a Ground Rule Double.

A batted ball that strikes the gym (Building 1222B), while in flight shall be ruled a Ground Rule Double, all base runners shall advance two bases from where they were when the ball was hit. A ball that hits the ground before striking the gym is in play.

If a ball is (a) stuck in the outfield fence, (b) bounces over the outfield fence or (c) goes under or through the outfield fence in fair territory— a Ground Rule Double will result. The outfielder must immediately raise his/her arms to communicate one of these situations to the umpire. If the umpire deems the ball to be playable, the batter shall be awarded a home run.

3. Protests will be considered only if the rules of protest are followed (read rule 9 in the ASA rulebook). The umpire and opposing team must be fully aware that an official protest is being lodged. To insure this, a note should be made at the time of the protest regarding the circumstances and signed by the umpire. This note should accompany the official protest that is sent in for judgement. Remember, only misapplication of the rules, not umpire judgement, is grounds for protest.

4. Check the field you are scheduled to play and sweep standing water from the base areas in the early afternoon so the sun can dry these areas by game time. Cancellations due to weather will be made as soon as practicable but no later than 4 PM. **Note that in addition to wet weather or unplayable field, cancellations will occur if the local outside heat index is at or above 105 degrees at 3PM game day.** Games not cancelled by 4 PM will be played as scheduled unless cancelled by the umpire at the field. If a first game on a given field is cancelled because of weather, the second game is also cancelled.

Cancellations made prior to 4 PM will be posted on the hotline (864-2200) as soon as the cancellation is official (so don't call anyone else!). Information on cancellations made after 4 PM might be obtained from the Activities Center bar.

5. All regular season games are time limited games with following rules:

- (a) The home team will provide both a new ball and a used backup ball.
- (b) Only one minute is allowed by the umpire between the third out call of one half-inning and the batter up call of the next half-inning.
- (c) The time limit is defined as 70 minutes from the beginning of the game, plus the time interval caused by a delay (rain, injury, stall, etc.). The umpire should notify both teams when this time limit is reached. Thereafter the game ends at any time that the home team is winning and batting; otherwise the game ends when the home team makes a third out. However, in tournament championship title games, the time limit is waived. The game will be played in its entirety with no time limit.
- (d) Forfeited games and games ended due to the time limit are regulation games, regardless of the score or the number of innings played. Games ended by any other reason are regulation games if at least five complete innings are played (four and one-half innings if the home team is ahead). Regulation games ending in a tie score will be designated as such in the standings. All other incomplete games are not regulation and will be replayed from the beginning.

6. A team wishing to postpone a scheduled game must get the opposing team to agree to have the game postponed and rescheduled to an available field and time slot. (This time slot must be prior to the last scheduled game of the current phase of the season, and must be coordinated with the Commissioner of Scheduling.) **POSTPONEMENT NOTIFICATION** (required by **12:00 PM** of the day of the postponement): The umpire must be notified (by phone if possible). An email specifically stating that the game has been postponed must be sent to the captains email list (which includes the umpires) to insure that a timely notification to both the umpire and opposing team has been made. Failure to do the above will result in a forfeit.

- (a) Each team will be allowed only two(2) postponement requests during the first half (Phase I) and two(2) for the second half (Phase II).
- (b) **TEAMS ARE ALLOWED NO POSTPONEMENTS DURING THE TOURNAMENT PHASE...**

7. Games postponed due to circumstances such as rain will be rescheduled by the Commissioner of Scheduling prior to the end of the current phase of the season. Postponed exhibition games are not rescheduled.

8. If you know you will forfeit a game due to lack of players and do not get the game postponed, notify those affected by following the procedure for postponement notification.

Your team can gain if you do this, because if a game on another field in your time slot gets rained out, your forfeit will be changed to a rainout and your game will be rescheduled. If no notification had been made, the forfeit as declared by the umpire at the field will be final.