Softball Rules
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY - MOORHEAD INTRAMURAL SPORTS
LAST UPDATED: JUNE 5, 2013

Rule 1: General Eligibility

Section 1: Participants
Participation is limited to currently-enrolled, fee-paying MSUM students, faculty members, and full-time staff. All players must sign-in with the supervisor at the event site prior to the event starting to participate.

Rule 2: Equipment

Section 1: Equipment
A. Players must provide their own gloves
B. Shoes must be worn. No open toed shoes of metal cleats will be allowed.
C. Appropriate jerseys must be worn: shorts/pants, socks, t-shirt/sweater, etc.
D. Personal bats must have the stamp of approval by ASA in order to be used. No wood bats will be allowed.

Rule 3: Team Members

Section 1: Team Qualifications
A. Teams must have a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 15 total on roster.
   a. Teams must consist of at least 5 females and 5 males
B. All players on the roster must be in the batting order, even if they are not playing in the field.
C. Ten players will play in the field: catcher, pitcher, 4 infielders, and 4 outfielders.
D. Teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start.

Rule 4: General Rules

Section 1: Guidelines
a. A seven-inning game is scheduled; however no new inning will begin after 50 minutes of play.
b. Co-Ed Teams: Must bat either every other boy-girl or girl-girl; if two boys bat in a row an out will be awarded to the fielding team (unless due to an injury of a female player during the game)
c. If a ball rolls under the fence and out of play, a ground rule double will be in effect for all players on base (this means every base runner may only advance 2 bases from where they were when the hit occurred).
d. Fielding team must get 3 outs to end an inning.
Section 2: Players and Substitutions
a. Players cannot be added to the roster/line-up after the first pitch has occurred.
b. Substitutes must be added to the roster before the game begins.
c. An injured player may be taken out of the order without a penalty.
d. Unlimited re-entry is allowed for all players throughout the game provided that
   the player only re-enters into the same spot in the batting order.

Section 3: Mercy Rule
The game will end if:
   a. Either team is ahead by 10 runs after 5 innings
   b. Either team is ahead by 15 runs after 4 innings
   c. Either team is ahead by 20 runs after 3 innings

Complete innings will be played unless the home team has or scores the differential
during their time at bat.

Section 4: Pitching
a. Contact: At least one foot must be in contact with the rubber as the ball is
   released
b. Stop: The pitcher must come to a stop with the ball in front of his body for a
   minimum of one second before beginning a pitching motion.
c. Step: A step is not necessary, but, if taken, may be in any direction, provided the
   release is simultaneous with the step.
d. Quick Release Pitch: The pitcher shall not attempt to pitch before the batter has
   taken a position in the batter’s box, or is off balance from the previous pitch.
e. Release:
   • The pitch must have an arc between 6-12 feet from the ground.
   • The ball must be released on the first forward swing past the hip.
   • The ball may not be behind the back of between the legs.
   • The pitch must be of moderate speed.
   • The pitcher may not continue to wind up after releasing the ball.
   • There may be no stop or reversal of the forward motion.
f. Illegal Pitch: Any illegal pitch will be called by the umpire when it occurs and will
   be a ball on the batter. *The illegal pitch is ignored and the result of the play is
   taken if the batter swings at an illegal pitch.*
g. Excessive Speed: If the umpire declares an excessive speed pitch, the umpire
   shall declare a ball on the batter and warn the pitcher. The second excessive
   speed pitch shall result in the pitcher’s removal from the pitching position for the
   remainder of the game.

Section 5: Batting and Base Running
a. Count: A 3 ball and 2 strike count will be used with ONE courtesy foul ball on the
   SECOND strike. A second foul ball on the second strike will result in a batter
   strike out.
b. **Out of Box:** The batter is out and the ball is dead if the batter hits the ball, fair or foul, while his entire foot is completely out of the batter's box (as judged by the umpire) and on the ground or touching home plate at the time of contact with the ball. When no box is available, out of the box will be defined as more than 3 feet in front of the plate or touching the plate.

c. **Bunt:** A batter is out if he/she bunt of chops at the ball at any time. (This includes not using a “full swing” as determined by the umpire.)

d. **Interference:** Any act by an offensive player or team member which impedes a defensive player attempting to execute a play on the ball. This will result in the assessment of any outs that may have resulted as judged by the umpire. If there is interference on a foul fly ball when the batter has two strikes, both the runner and the batter are out. The runner MUST avoid the fielder.

e. **Runner Interference:** Runners hit by a ball batted fair BEFORE the ball passes an infielder are out. If the ball hits a runner after it is touched by or touched a fielder, the runner is not out. A runner contacting the fielder in an act of fielding is OUT.

f. **Deliberate Crash:** When the defensive player has the ball or is about to receive the ball and the runner crashes in to the defensive player, the runner is out. If the act is judged as intentional, then the player will be EJECTED. If there is a close play the runner must avoid contact with the fielder or they will be called out. This is at the umpire’s discretion and is a judgment call, therefore is not arguable. If there is contact and the ball is dropped by the fielder, the runner will be declared out. It should also be noted that there is no head first sliding at any time or at any base, if the runner does slide head first they will be declared out.

g. **Obstruction:** Obstruction is the act of a fielder who is in the base path without the ball and is not attempting to field a batted ball or receive a thrown ball. This will result in the umpire using a delayed dead ball, thus allowing the runner to continue to advance. If the runner is tagged out prior to the base they would have reached, a dead ball is called and the runner is awarded the base. Runners attempting to advance beyond that base that they would have earned do so at their own risk.

h. **Catcher Obstruction:** If the catcher obstructs a batter by tipping the bat or holding his glove over home plate, the batter is awarded first base. Exceptions: If the batter reaches first and all runners advance at least one base.

i. **Fake Tag:** A fielder may not make a fake tag, tag without the ball, on a runner advancing or returning to a base. A fake tag could result in a possible ejection.

j. **Touching Bases in Legal Order:** On an over the fence home run the batter and all runners automatically score. In this case appeals are not allowed. If the field does not have a fence, then appeals are allowed regarding the bases.

k. **Infield Fly:** When there are fewer than two outs, and there is a force play at third (runners on first and second base, or bases loaded). In these situations, if a fair fly ball is hit that, in the umpires judgment, is catchable by an infielders with ordinary effort, the batter is out regardless of whether the ball is actually caught in flight.

**Section 6: Co-Ed Regulations**
a. **Players:** Equal number of men to women must be listed on the line-up or more women than men.
b. **Line Up:** No men may bat in a row (see guidelines section 1)
c. **Walks:** A male batter is awarded two bases if walked. A female batter is awarded one base. If there are two outs and a male is just walked, the female has a choice to take the walk to second or bat.

**Section 7: Player Conduct**

a. **Eligibility:** The team manager or captain is responsible for eligibility and conduct of all their players.
b. **Unsportsmanlike Acts:** Situations include, but not limited to:
   - Excessively digging into the batter’s box
   - Verbal abuse to other players or an umpire
   - A fake tag
   - Thrown bat or other equipment
   - Intentionally delaying the game
   - Taunting
   - Physical contact with other players or the umpire
   - Violation of the NO alcohol policy

If any unsportsmanlike act is conducted that player(s) will be ejected from the game and will not be allowed to compete until they have met with the Intramural Sports Director.