

# CHAMP Softball Rules

## Online Registration

If you register for a particular team, please note the team captain's name in your registration.

All payments are made online using a Debit/Credit card. No practice OR playing allowed until registered, waiver agreement signed, and payment made.

CHAMP staff will make teams once players have registered.

## Players

A maximum of seventeen (17) players and a minimum of twelve (12) players are required to make up a team.

At least two (2) females OR (1) female and (1) senior adult (over 60) must participate on the field during each inning. A maximum of eight (8) men (under 60) may play on the field at any given time. If there are less than 2 females in the batting lineup, all players on that team will start with one (1) ball and two (2) strikes. The only exception to this is when both teams have the same number (one or zero) of women available. Coaches can agree on strike count in this situation.

If a team can only field eight (8) players, the opposing team shall provide a courtesy catcher. However, it is the defensive's team's responsibility to cover home plate on a play. A courtesy catcher will not be provided for a team with 9 players.

Metal cleats are NOT permitted.

## Game Time/Duration

Games will consist of seven (7) innings or a one-hour time limit, whichever comes first, for the first game. An inning in the first of two back-to-back games that begins after fifty (50) minutes of play will be the last inning of the game. The second or last game of the night will play seven (7) full innings or as daylight allows. When the game time has expired, the umpire will make an announcement that no new innings may begin. An inning is considered complete once the third out is made against the home team. If only one game is scheduled on the field that night, the time limit will not be affected.

Each game will begin with both teams lining the base lines at home plate with the home team captain opening with prayer. All players from both games will meet at the pitchers mound for the nightly devotion between games. Each game will end with the teams shaking hands and closing in prayer.

## **Tie Game**

If a game is tied at the end of seven (7) innings before the end of the one-hour time limit, one extra inning will be played. If teams are still tied at the end of that inning, the game will be recorded as a tie.

## **Forfeit**

If a team has less than seven (7) players, the game is a forfeit unless an eighth player arrives within twenty minutes of the game starting. If both captains agree, games may still be played by adding players from the opposing team. If more players are still needed, other players who are enrolled in the Calvary Adult Coed Softball league may play. However, the game is still considered a forfeit. Note: No spectators or non-registered people can play under any circumstance.

In the event of a forfeit, the winning team shall be awarded a score of 1 to 0.

## **Mercy Rule**

Only ten (10) runs will be allowed per half inning except for the last inning of a game. If a single play in a half inning (excluding the last inning) results in more than ten (10) runs being scored all of the runs scored in that play will be counted. (Example: a grand slam is hit when nine (9) runs have already been scored. All four (4) of those runs will be counted).

In the course of a game, if one team is ahead by 10 runs or more after five (5) completed innings of play (or 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead), the game shall be considered complete. Teams will be allowed to keep playing if desired but official score and result will be recorded at the institution of the mercy rule.

## **Pitching**

Each pitch must meet an arc requirement of 6-10 feet from the ground. A pitcher must keep one foot in contact with the pitching rubber throughout the entire pitching motion; there is to be no windup (it is slow pitch!). If a pitch is too high or too low, or the pitcher's foot is not on the rubber, it will be called "illegal" by the umpire and considered a "ball." If a batter swings and misses a pitch deemed illegal, it is counted as a strike. If the batter is not set in the box and the pitch occurs, it will be called a "no pitch" and not counted.

## **Pitching Screen**

Any batted ball that hits the screen, will be considered a foul ball. If the batter has one (1) strike and the batter hits the ball into the screen, it will be considered a foul ball and a strike. If the batter has (2) strikes and the batter hits the ball into the screen it will be considered a foul ball and they will remain at bat. If the batter hits the screen a second time with (2) two strikes they will be called out.

The pitcher must finish behind the screen once he/she releases the ball. After the ball is hit, the pitcher may come out from behind the screen and become a defensive player. The screen must be 3 feet in front of the pitching rubber. The screen does not go on top of the mound or right beside it.

The screen is not to be moved or knocked down while a throw is coming in from the outfield or infield to home plate or first base. If the screen is moved by a defensive player during a play, the play continues; however, once the play is over, all runners are safe and move up one base because of obstruction.

If a ball thrown from the outfield or infield hits the screen, it is a live ball until the play is over.

The screen stays on the field in front of the mound for the duration of the game.

## **Batting**

All players present will be included in the batting order, regardless of whether they are playing the field. If a player arrives late, he or she will be added to the end of the batting order (make sure to inform the opposing team). All players are to play the field at least three (3) innings.

Each batter will start his at bat with a count of one (1) ball and one (1) strike. If a batter hits a foul ball on a count of two strikes, he will be given one courtesy foul. If that batter hits a second foul ball on two strikes, he will be called out.

If a batter is hit by a pitch, the pitch counts as a ball (not a walk). If a player is leaning into the path of the ball and is hit, the player will be charged a strike (i.e. if unimpeded the ball would have been a strike).

Only **ASA/USA Softball** approved bats are allowed. Bats will be checked upon arrival.

Bunting is not allowed.

Walk Rule - If a male batter is walked and a female or senior is up next, he automatically is awarded two (2) bases. Any runner on base will be forced forward by the batter to the next open base. A runner on first base will advance to third base. A runner on second base will advance to third base. A runner on third base **will not** advance home unless another runner has advanced to third base. If the bases are loaded, two runs will score. If there are two outs, the female or senior batter will have the choice to walk or hit.

## **Strike Zone Mat**

As long as the ball meets the arc of 6 feet minimum and 10 feet maximum, and hits any part of the mat, including the plate, it is a strike. If possible, the mat should be removed if a play at home plate is likely. If the mat has not been removed, touching any part of the mat will count as touching home plate.

## **Running/Fielding**

If the ball goes out-of-play (beyond the fence lines) all base runners advance one (1) base beyond the base to which they were running (i.e. if a runner starts on first base and is running to second when the ball is overthrown, he will advance to third base).

To avoid collisions between runners and fielders, there is an orange safety bag to the right of first base. When a play is being made at first base, the fielder **MUST** use the white portion of the base, and the runner **MUST** use the orange portion. If the fielder touches the orange base during the play, the runner will be ruled safe. If the runner touches the white base during the play, the runner will be ruled out. After the runner is declared safe at first base, the runner may use the white or orange base. If there is **NO** play at first base, the runner may use the white or

the orange base.

Stand-up collisions are strongly prohibited. Sliding is encouraged, but not required. However, the responsibility of avoiding contact lies with the runner. If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner fails to take the necessary steps to avoid contact or causes contact, he will be called out. The fielder also has the responsibility to avoid obstructing the base lines. If, in the umpire's judgment, a fielder is unnecessarily blocking a base line or hinders a base runner intentionally or unintentionally, the base runner will be given the base they are in pursuit of and awarded an extra base.

There is no base stealing; your foot must keep contact with the bag until batter has made contact with the ball.

Infield Fly Rule – The batter is automatically called out if the batter hits a fly ball that is catchable by an infielder with ordinary effort when there are runners on first and second base with no outs or bases are loaded with less than two (2) outs.

There will be a line 200 feet from home plate. Three out of four outfielders must stay behind the line before the ball is hit. The fourth outfielder can be in front of the line when the ball is hit. In cases where there are only three outfielders, two of three outfielders must stay behind the line before the ball is hit.

The catcher cannot block a baserunner's path to home plate unless the catcher has the ball. If the catcher must move into the baserunner's path to home plate in order to catch a thrown ball, the catcher may do so. If the catcher intentionally blocks the plate in order to slow down the runner and they do not have the ball, the baserunner can be ruled safe.

## **Umpire/Rules**

At all times the umpire has the final say in the game. If there is a dispute over a call, only the captains have the right to discuss it with the umpire. Any incident of over-aggressive or dangerous play will result in a warning from the umpire, but any player may be ejected at any time according to the umpire's discretion. As this is a Christian league, please play with civility and respect.

Foul language of any kind constitutes an immediate ejection from the game.

## **Weather**

In the event of inclement weather or other harmful conditions, four (4) full innings will constitute a full game. Any observations of lightning or thunder will start a 30-minute wait period. If no lightning or thunder is observed in that period, play may resume; otherwise, the game will be called at the discretion of the umpire.

All information regarding weather conditions and field status will be conveyed through the CHAMP Weather Hotline. **The Weather Hotline will be updated by 3 PM on weekdays. For weather updates call: 704.341.5473 or check the CHAMP website at [www.champsportsinfo.com/weather](http://www.champsportsinfo.com/weather).**