

SOFTBALL RULES AND STRATEGIES

THE GAME: There are seven (7) innings in a game, and each team is given three outs per inning.

PITCHING:

- 1. The ball must be pitched underhand.**
- 2. The pitcher starts with both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate and takes no more than one step before releasing.**
- 3. Strike zone: between knees and shoulders and over the plate.**

**** IN THE EVENT OF AN ILLEGAL PITCH:** Batter receives a ball. Baserunners advance one base.

BATTING AND BASERUNNING:

- 1. No bunting, stealing, or leading off. Pitched ball must leave the pitcher's hand before baserunners can start running.**
- 2. A runner may only overrun first base.**
- 3. Runners must return to base and tag-up on a fly ball that is caught. They may then run to the next base, even on a caught foul.**
- 4. A foul ball on the third strike is an out.**

**** FOUL TIP:** A foul ball which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head and into the catcher's mitt and is held results in a strike. On the third strike it is an out.

WALK:

- 1. Four balls make a walk.**

OUTS OCCUR WHEN:

- 1. Three strikes for the batter.**
- 2. Any fair or foul ball that is caught before hitting the ground.**
- 3. When a foul tip occurs after the second strike.**
- 4. When runner is hit by own ball in fair territory before it is played by a fielder.**
- 5. Members of the team at bat interfere with a fielder attempting to make a play on a ball.**

6. When the batter steps out of the batter's box while hitting the ball.
7. When a runner is tagged while off the base.
8. Force out: When the fielder with the ball touches the base where a runner is being forced to run to because other runners are forced to run.
9. If the runner goes more than three feet out of the baseline path to avoid being tagged.
10. The ball is thrown to the base before the runner gets back to tag up after a caught fly ball.
11. The ball is thrown to a base which the runner failed to touch.
12. The runner interferes with a fielder trying to field the ball.
13. The batter interferes with a play being made at home.

BATTER IS SAFE WHEN:

1. The fielder drops or juggles the ball while attempting to tag a runner.
2. The fielder blocks a runner's path without having possession of the ball or attempting to field a ball.

OVERTHROW: Only one base is allowed on an overthrow. The runner may continue past the base he is running toward and continue to the next base only.

STRATEGY

1. Go for the sure out.
2. Do not leave any open spaces in the field. Fill the gaps.
3. Short stop covers second base on a ball hit to the right side of the base.
4. The Pitcher or 2nd baseman covers first when the first baseman fields the ball.
5. All positions should look to back up all throws and catches.
6. When fielding, watch the ball go into your mitt and use your free hand to secure the catch.
7. Outfielders throw to the base ahead of the runner unless you can make the out for sure.

- 8. Remember where every player hits (from previous innings), so that you can position yourself for the next time.**
- 9. When fielding a ground ball, keep your mitt down and get behind the ball. On a fly ball, use both hands.**
- 10. Run towards slow grounders to get the ball faster. Keep your eye on the ball.**
- 11. Before the ball is hit, check where the baserunners are so you know where to make the play, if you get the ball. Think ahead.**
- 12. Always keep your eyes on the ball no matter what you are doing.**