



## **2022 Softball Rules for the 40+, 50+, 60+, and 70+ Leagues**

### **OBJECTIVE**

To provide a recreational outlet for senior softball players by forming competitively balanced teams from among the individuals registered in each league.

### **GENERAL RULES**

All rules and regulations of the SSUSA (Senior Softball USA) shall apply except where superseded by these PPRSSA rules.

### **REGISTRATION**

#### **1.1 Age Qualification:**

All male players must be at least 40 years old sometime during the current calendar year to be eligible to play in the PPRSSA. Women for the 70+ league must be 60 years old or older. Women for the 60+ league must be 50 years old or older. Women for the 50+ league must be 40 years old or older. A team violating the age qualification rule in any game will automatically forfeit that game.

#### **1.2 Registration Fee:**

Registration will be on an individual basis at a yearly fee set by the PPRSSA Board.

#### **1.3 Draft and Number of Teams:**

Each league will make every effort to place all registered players on a team. To ensure we maximize the number of games played PPRSSA will not create an odd number of teams in any league. In the event the number of players registered results in an odd number of teams the league may put players on a standby list based on date of their registration. As drafted players drop from the league we will assign players from the standby list to teams with vacancies.

### **NUMBER OF PLAYERS TO START AND FINISH GAME**

Teams may start and finish with a minimum of 8 players. If a team starts with 8, there is no penalty for missing players. See details in "Teams without enough players." All leagues are allowed to field no more than 11 defensive positions, except 40+ which fields no more than 10 defensive players. The Team manager can position their players anywhere he/she wants but only one outfielder can play on the infield.

### **TEAMS WITHOUT ENOUGH PLAYERS**

The intent of this rule is to avoid forfeiture due to a lack of players. Teams with less than 11 (10 for 40+) players, at the start of the game have the following options, in this order:



- A. A team with fewer than 11 (10 for 40+) players may augment its teams with players from other teams, who are current paid members of the PPRSSA in any league as long as they meet age requirements. Augmented players may be added to bring team strength up to 11 (10 for 40+) players, subject to both Team Managers' approval and the League Representative's approval.
- B. Augmented players bat and play defense with the team they have joined for that game.
- C. If the participating teams have complied with the above rules and one or both teams still do not have at least 8 players, a team may agree to play with the available players or forfeit the game.
- D. When a team has less than the 11(10 for 40+) players, the opposing team **must** supply a catcher for defense only. Should a player be lost due to injury or emergency during the play of the game, teams may replace the injured player in accordance with the above rules. Teams will not be charged an out if a player is removed from the lineup.

### **GAME PROCEDURES**

1. **Game:** Games will be seven (7) innings. Every effort should be made to play a 7-inning game. However, when circumstances warrant, BOTH managers, may agree to shorten a game to five (5) innings. BOTH managers must agree to shorten a game or the game will go the normal 7 innings. The final planned inning will be "OPEN".
2. **Ball/strike count:** Batters are allowed 4 balls and/or 3 strikes. All batters will start with a 1-1 ball/strike count. There will be a "waste foul" available to a batter after there are two strikes in the count.  

NOTE: Any batted ball that hits the Pitcher's screen is a foul ball and tracked as any other foul ball.
3. **Ball:** A 12-inch ball (COR 44/375) will be used.
4. **Bats:** Players may use any certified bat up to a max of 1.21 BPF. Wooden bats are not allowed.
5. **Bases:** Bases are set by Park & Rec and will be at 70 feet.
6. **Commitment line:** Commitment line is thirty feet from the scoring line. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advancing to the scoring line and may no longer be tagged out. EFFECT: Tag of the runner by a defensive player will not be allowed. The runner will be called safe, the ball remains live and the runner is not required to touch the scoring plate or cross the scoring line. NOTE: If a runner re-crosses the commitment line for any reason in an attempt to return to third base, he will be declared out and the ball remains live.



7. **Scoring line:** A straight line will be drawn from the front edge of home plate, nearest foul territory. A line will be approx. 10 feet. This line represents the second home plate. Base runners must step on the line or touch the ground beyond this line.
8. **Strike Mat:** A mat will be used to determine the strike zone. A legal pitched ball hitting the plate or mat is a strike.
9. **Scoring:** Through the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, teams can score a maximum of 5 runs per inning. After the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, scoring is unlimited.
10. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after five innings have been completed, or 20 runs after four innings, the game shall be declared a complete regulation game.
11. **Tie game:** Games tied after seven innings will continue, with the international tie-breaker rule, until one team is ahead after the completion of any subsequent inning.
  - **INTERNATIONAL TIE-BREAKER RULE:** Teams start each half-inning with a runner on second base. The runner is the last batter of the previous inning whose turn at bat had been completed, assuming a position on second base. No substitute or courtesy runner may replace him until he has reached third base. If the game is still tied after one extra inning, the pitch count will default to one pitch per batter. A pitch that is fouled, swung at and missed, or hits the plate/mat, the batter will be out. The batter will be awarded first base if the pitch is not swung at and does not hit the plate/mat.
12. **PITCHER NET RULES:**
  - Pitcher's Net will be placed 40 feet from the back of home plate, between the pitcher's rubber and home plate. Pitchers must pitch from behind the net and the pitch must go over the net's frame.
  - Pitchers must remain behind the net until the batter makes contact with the ball. If a pitcher moves from behind the net to take a defensive stance outside the net before the batter makes contact with the ball, the pitch is ruled a "dead ball" and batter will be awarded first base and other runners will advance one base if forced to advance. The offensive team has the option to take the results of the play if the batter goes ahead and hits the ball. The catcher or either base coach can make the call that the pitcher was positioned outside the net before the batter made contact with the ball.
  - Note that a batted ball hitting the Pitcher's screen is a foul ball and treated as any other foul ball.
  - On a called infield fly, if the ball hits the screen it will be a dead ball, the batter is called out and runners do not advance.
  - On any other fly ball (not an infield fly situation), ANY batted ball that hits the screen before a fielder can touch it, it's a FOUL ball.
  - If a thrown ball by the defensive player hits the pitcher's net during live play the ball remains LIVE.



- The ball will be DEAD if the ball becomes blocked in the net or in the box. If a runner beyond 3<sup>rd</sup> base has passed the commitment line, he will be awarded home. All other runners will return to the last base touched at the time of the blocked ball.
13. **FLIP-FLOP:** The flip-flop rule will be invoked in any game when there is a 10-run differential in favor of the visiting team at the start of the "open inning." If the visiting team is ahead by ten or more runs, the home team will remain at bat and start a new at-bats (beginning their seventh or last inning at-bats), meaning all runners then on base will return to the dugout. It will be an open inning. If the home team fails to tie or go ahead of the visiting team, the game ends and the visiting team wins. If the home team ties or goes ahead, the visiting team takes its turn at bat.
  14. **Double base:** Batter/runner must touch the orange part of the double base on plays at 1<sup>st</sup> base. If the umpire/base coach does not make the call, the defensive team may appeal to the umpire/base coach.
  15. **Number of Players:** Before the game begins, the opposing team manager should be notified of the number of players batting. Players may take the field on defense without regard to the re-entry rule. Teams will not be charged an out if a player is removed from the lineup. 11 defensive players for the 50+, 60+, and 70+ leagues will be the norm for a game, 10 for 40+ league.
  16. **Pitching height:** The pitching height of a legal pitch must be from six to 12 feet above the playing surface. If a pitched ball hits the Net, it's a "ball".
  17. **Pitching Box:** The pitcher can pitch anywhere between 50 and 60 feet from home plate.
  18. **Infield ball:** An infield ball is allowed when the pitcher is taking warm up pitches. The pitcher is allowed ONE minute to complete the warm up pitches.
  19. The 200 foot line must be honored for all female batters. A team must have 4 defensive outfielders behind the 200 ft. line (3 if only fielding 9 players) until contact is made with the ball. Any outfielder may throw the female runner out at first base. Any violation of the 200-foot line will result in a dead ball, the female runner is awarded first base and other runners do not advance unless forced.
  20. Rain out games will not be made up. A week missed due to weather will be postponed. The league schedule will be updated and games will continue the following week, maintaining the team match ups from the missed week. Games will be removed from end of the schedule before the end of season tournament.
  21. **Home Run:**
    - A home run is defined as any batted ball that goes over the fence in fair territory. "Inside the park" home runs are excluded from this rule. The home run batter may



return directly to the dugout and all other runners may return directly to the dugout. This is known as "Hit and Sit."

- There is no limit to the number of home runs that one team can hit. However, no team can hit more than 1 more home run than their opponent. If a team does hit a home run and they are already "1-up", the home run will be considered a walk. - note a walk is different than a single. For example, if the team batting has a runner on third when a 1-up home run is hit, the runner does not score (unless forced to do so).

### **SELF-OFFICIATED GAMES**

The 1<sup>st</sup> base coach will be the umpire for calls at 1<sup>st</sup> base and at home plate. The 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach will be the umpire for calls at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. No volunteer umpire is permitted in this league. If the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches fail to make a safe/out call, the base runner will be out. The two team managers can talk it over to get the correct call. The catcher will call balls and strikes, foul balls, illegal pitches, and Infield Fly. If it is believed that the fair/foul call was incorrect, the team managers can talk it over to get the correct call. If the pitcher continues to pitch illegal pitches, the two Team Managers will meet to correct the situation.

Note: An infield fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder **with ordinary effort**.

Note: A foul ball call is given orally but a fair ball is indicated by the catcher pointing to fair territory.

### **SLIDING OR DIVING**

Sliding into 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base and diving back to any base will be allowed. Sliding at home is not allowed.

### **RUN BY /TAGS / ATTEMPT TO ADVANCE**

**RUN BY:** The RUN BY RULE at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> does not apply to this league. Players are not permitted to overrun second and third base without being in jeopardy of being tagged out. **TAGS ARE ALLOWED.** The runner must avoid collision even in the event of a tag. The runner may not swipe at the player attempting to tag in an attempt to dislodge the ball. In a run-down situation or in any situation that would require a tag, the defense needs to tag the runner. This rule does not apply at home plate; the defense must always touch either the strike Mat or the white plate to force the baserunner at home.

- Runners shall be called out for contact with a defensive player if, in the umpire's judgment, the contact could reasonably have been expected to minimize or avoid contact under the circumstances and failed to do so.



## **INTERFERENCE**

No runner may touch/interfere with a fielder who is in the process of fielding a batted or thrown ball. If interference occurs, the runner who contacted the fielder is out, ball becomes dead, and batter-runner, if appropriate, is awarded one base. A fielder, not about to receive a thrown ball, should not stand on a base while the runner is advancing to that base. If a fielder is standing on a base in this situation, this is Obstruction.

Note: Any Obstruction/Interference situation may be appeal and the two Team Managers will solve the issue.

## **TOUCHING THE SECOND HOME PLATE (SCORING LINE)**

- A straight line will be drawn from the front edge of home plate, nearest foul territory. This line represents the second home plate. Base runners must step on the line or touch the ground beyond this line.
- If the base runner touched the original home plate, or enters the batter box, he/she will be automatically out.
- The base runner may be retired at home plate on a non-force situation without a tag. The defensive player only has to hold the ball while either touching the strike mat or the original home plate.

## **COURTESY RUNNERS**

Unlimited courtesy runners are allowed each inning. Any player on the roster may be used as a runner; however, an individual may be used only once per inning as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while he/she is on base will be replaced with another courtesy runner who will run in his/her place, no out will be called.

### **Courtesy Runners from Home Plate**

A courtesy runner from home plate to first base is **not** allowed. Each batter must reach first base on their own. Once on or beyond first base, a courtesy runner is allowed.