



# Softball Rules



Updated May 25, 2022

## 1. Pre-Game – Equipment, Game Time, Defaults & Foul Weather

Play that is competitive, overly aggressive, rough and/or unsportsmanlike such as pushing, shoving, elbowing, shouldering, tripping, hacking, slashing, sliding, tackling, ball blasting, chirping, name calling, threats and intimidation, is prohibited and will not be tolerated by FCSSC. FCSSC IS FIRST-AND-FOREMOST-FOR-FUN. ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM THE GAME, THE LEAGUE, THE CLUB AND/OR ALL OF THE ABOVE. All players should go out of their way to avoid contact with other players and/or eliminate actions or behaviours that could jeopardize player safety. If accidental contact occurs it is expected that players will apologize for that contact, ensure everyone is alright and stop the game to seek appropriate help as required. This rule supersedes all others!

**Spirit of the League:** An integral part of all the sports that the Forest City Sport & Social Club offers. It is based on the primary focus of the FCSSC, which is sportsmanship and to have FUN...NOT on competitive and aggressive sport.

**Equipment/Set-Up:** *FCSSC Game Coordinators will provide bases and softballs for each game.* Teams are to provide their own softball gloves, catcher masks and bats.

### **Game Time/Default:**

- Please arrive 15 minutes early so that you can start your games on time. Games are 7 innings in length with a time limit of 1.5 hours. A default will occur if any team cannot field a squad by 15 minutes after the official start time.
- If the team that was first to bat is losing after the top of the 7th inning, they have the choice to call the game or let the other team bat.
- Games that are forced to be cut short due to time or dangerous playing conditions (ie. weather) will end with the final score being the score at the end of the previous completed inning.
- No new inning can start with 5 minutes left before the formal end time.
- During playoffs, if the game is tied after the completion of 7 innings, or the expired time, teams will utilize the following format. The team that is up to bat will start the inning by placing their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base, with 2 outs. Once 3 outs have been reached, the other team will then place their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base (also with 2 outs) and proceed to bat until 3 outs is reached. Teams will take turns doing this until the score is settled upon the completion of a full inning.
- Teams are comprised of nine (9) players (1 rover) with a minimum of three (3) of each gender. A team can play with a minimum of 7 people, as long as there are two (2) of each gender. A team can also play with 8 people if they only have two of one gender (i.e. 2 women), BUT a team of 9 or more players that only has two women can only have 8 players on defense (you will be playing short 1 person on defense).
- Maximum roster size is 15 players per game. More than 15 can be rostered on a team, but **a maximum of 15 players can show up** for each game.

**Foul Weather:** In the event of severe weather (thunder and lightning storms) games should immediately be stopped and players should take cover away from open spaces. Wait 15 minutes; if the severe weather passes, continue play. If it does not and the game was in the first half, the game must be re-played. If it was in the 2nd half, then the score at that time of when the game is stopped will count as the final score.

**Alcohol:** THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DRINKING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PERMITTED WHILE PLAYING!! ANY OFFENDERS WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE LEAGUE WITHOUT REFUND. No exceptions.

## 2. In Game – General Rules, Scoring, Pitching, Batting, Hits, Runners

### General Rules:

1. A coin toss or paper/rock/scissors should determine the home team (except during playoffs, when the higher ranked team will have the choice to bat 1st or 2nd)
2. The catcher must wear the provided mask during pitching. The mask can be removed after the ball has been hit and the batter has dropped the bat. This rule is in place and must be followed to ensure player safety.
3. The rover may play anywhere on the field with the exception of the catcher's position and within the baselines before the ball is hit.
4. Each inning is played with 3 outs or when a team scores a maximum of eight (8) runs. EXCEPTION: A team has no run limit in the final inning of the game.
5. 1st base and home plate will have "safety bases". As such, there will be a base for the first basemen and the catcher to touch and a separate base for the runner to step on. For the other bases, fielders should be touching 1 side of the base allowing a baserunner to touch the base without interference. There is absolutely no sliding. Any base runner that slides is automatically out. A player cannot be tagged at first base, rather the first base player must tag the base.
6. There is a "commit-line" halfway between 3rd base and home plate marked with an extra base. Once the runner has crossed this line, they cannot return to 3rd base. If they do, it is an automatic out.
7. A "force out" will always be in effect between 3rd base and home plate once the baserunner has crossed over the "commit line", meaning that a team can touch home plate with the ball rather than tag the runner to achieve an out.
8. A player can overrun 1st base without being tagged out if they continue to follow the foul line or stay to the right of it.
9. The team at bat provides their own pitcher. The pitcher can pitch from wherever they chose. If a hit ball touches the pitcher, the ball is declared dead and the pitch is redone – base runners return to their previous bases and the pitch count is restored. (Pitchers should do their best to avoid making contact with a hit ball).
10. Every batter can receive a maximum of three (3) pitches. All foul balls, wild pitches, strikes and balls count as one of the three pitches. The only exception is a ball that hits the pitcher (see rule 11)
11. There is no bunting or faking to bunt. However, a ball that is hit with a full swing, but does not go past the pitcher IS a live, playable ball.
12. The batting order is two (2) men followed by one (1) woman - but teams that have more women than men can alter this format. The male order and female order must always stay the same, although the order when mixed may change depending on the male/female ratio. A team must use their full roster for batting (i.e. players cannot only play defense), and all players must bat before a player of the same gender can bat for the second time (this may change the male/female order). If a team only has two women present, the batting order will be 2 men, woman A, 2 men, woman B, 2 men, woman A etc. The spot where woman C should have been will NOT be an automatic out. The batting order should remain intact from inning to inning. Any players arriving after their team has batted in the first inning, will be inserted into the bottom of the gender batting order. The first player to bat in an inning is the person following the player who recorded the last at bat from the previous inning.
13. Mercy rule: If a team is up by 15 runs or more after the 5th inning of play, the losing team has the option of calling the game or choosing to continue.
14. There are no leadoffs for base runners; you must wait until contact with the ball is made. Please respect this rule.
15. Foul ball calls (balls that are hit outside of the base lines) should be made by the catcher. Controversial "out" or "safe" calls at each of the bases should be made by "base-coaches" – i.e. extra players on the offensive team. If base-coaches are not being used, all controversial calls should be made by the pitcher. Please do your best to ensure that the game is being called in a fair manner.
16. A 'foul ball' pop-up behind home plate can only be caught for an out, if it goes higher than 3 metres (10 feet). A ball not exceeding this height is considered a 'strike'.
17. Players on base are allowed to "tag-up" on a pop fly. Base runners must not leave the base until the fielder has caught the ball.
18. There is no "infield-fly" rule in effect. However, it is poor sportsmanship to purposely drop a ball to try and get a double play.
19. If a ball is overthrown at 1st or 3rd base and goes 'out of play' - which is over the fence, into the dugout, beyond the extended backstop etc., then the base runners can advance 1 'free' base. If the ball stays in play (hits fence, etc) then the ball is live, and the runners can advance at their own risk.
20. Baserunners must stay along the base paths. They cannot move more than 3 feet away from an imaginary line or they will be deemed out.
21. Pinch runners should only be pinch runner if the batter is injured on a play. They are only allowed to substitute for a player once the batter has reached first base.
22. Players in the field are not allowed to stand inside the baselines before a player attempts to hit a ball. ie. Shortstop can't come up and stand beside pitcher before batter has swung at ball.

23. No metal cleats are allowed.

**Ground Rules:** Captains should decide prior to the start of the game if they are going to play any ground rules with regards to boundaries. Please make sure that both teams are aware of these rules.

**Rough Play:** ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM FURTHER LEAGUE PLAY AND MAY RESULT IN LIFETIME LEAGUE EXPULSION. PLEASE SEE THE FCSSC POLICY SHEET FOR OUR OFFICIAL POLICY ON THIS SUBJECT. All players should go out of their way to avoid creating an unsafe play. This rule supersedes all others.

**Playoffs:**

- No Ringers! To play on playoff nights players must have played a minimum of 2 regular season games (6-8 week season) or 3 regular season games (9-16 week season) for that team. For volleyball and dodgeball leagues, games = nights.
- A player is only allowed to play for one team in each playoff round. Players cannot sub in for another team during the same round, most particularly in a championship game. Exception: a player may sub for another team in the same league during the same play-off round IF the game is not a championship game (ie, title on the line) and the team needing a sub would default the game without the substitute player (resulting in both teams being unable to play).

### **3. Post-Game – Departure & Score Reporting**

**Departure:** Each week after your game, it is important to leave the diamond in a timely manner. Teams could be playing after you and will need to get their game started on time. It is also possible that the facility could be closing upon the completion of your game and all staff and members will need to depart the building at that time.

**Score Reporting:** Captains from each team are responsible for reporting or confirming game scores within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Scores can be reported or confirmed via our website at [www.forestcityssc.ca](http://www.forestcityssc.ca). Score reporting reminders are NOT sent via email in the new system, so captains are asked to remember to log in to their accounts to report the scores.