



Rule Summary

Starting play & forfeits	Game Play
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⦿ Must have 8 to play. ⦿ 15 minutes grace for each game before forfeit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⦿ Full count (short count M-1). May switch to short count mid game if both managers agree. ⦿ Home Runs – 2 for M-4/5/6, 3 for M1-3 & MS1 ⦿ Pitching – from 50ft mound or up to 6’ behind ⦿ Unlimited courtesy runners ⦿ No stealing, bunting, or half swings ⦿ No metal cleats ⦿ Can add players to the lineup at any point in the game
Time/Inning Limits	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⦿ 1st game – no time limit, extra innings ok ⦿ 2nd game – no new inning within 10 minutes of the 2-1/2 hr time period. Extra innings ok. ⦿ 10 run rule after 4.5/5 innings (12 for M-1) 	

Rules in normal font are common for all divisions/leagues.
Rules in **bold** differ and are specific to this division/league.

Game Day Playing Rules

Official league games will be conducted under the United States Slo-pitch Softball Association (USSSA) rules; except for the following:

1. Modifications to Playing Rules: If the managers of both teams agree ahead of time, any modifications to the playing rules may be adopted in order to help make play possible, improve the flow of the game, increase the safety of the players, or make the game more fun as long as the umpire deems the requested changes to be safe and not cause an unnecessary strain on the integrity of the game.

Changes can be made before the game begins, **or at any time during the game**, but only apply after the rule is agreed upon (the change cannot be applied retroactively to play that already occurred). Note: Both managers must agree or the change cannot be made.

For example, if managers agree to allow 5 home runs, then that rule should be adopted for that game.

2. Drinking: Per Local ordinances, there is no drinking at any of the fields or in the parking lots.
3. Base Length: The league will use 65’ base paths
4. Softballs: The official softballs will be the USSSA approved (blue stitch) softball. 12” for Men and 11” for Women.
5. Bats: In accordance with USSSA Rule 2 Section 2 N.3, any USSSA marked 1.20 BPF bat may be used in BB/SAA games so long as the bat meets the standards of condition outlined in USSSA rule 2 Section 2.L.
6. **Game Balls: Each team shall provide one new ball for each doubleheader. The opposing team shall provide backup balls.**
7. **Time All regularly scheduled games shall be doubleheaders.**
 - a) **There is no time limit on the first game of a doubleheader and extra innings are allowed.**
 - b) **The second game shall start five minutes after the completion of the first game.**
 - c) **No new inning, during the second game, shall be started within 10 minutes of the end of the two-and-a-half hour (2:30) time slot reserved for the double header.**



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8. Batting Lineup/Order A team's batting order may include more than 10 players. All players in the defensive line-up must be in the batting order. Each player's position in the batting order must remain unchanged throughout the game, and any player removed from the batting order may not return to the game either as a batter or as a defensive player. Additional batters may be added at the end of the batting order at any time.
- A player may not be removed from the batting order unless:
- He/She is replaced by a pinch hitter; or
 - He/She is injured or ill; or
 - He/She is required to leave the field to attend to a personal emergency (player may not re-enter until the next game).
 - The manager advises the umpire and the opposing manager, before the start of the game, that the player will be leaving the field during the game. The player may not re-enter until the next game.
- There is no penalty for situations A - D, the batting order will merely be shortened (exception in Co-ed – see “Co-ed Player Requirements” rule)
- He/She is ejected by the umpire.
EFFECT: Any player who is removed from the batting order by umpire ejection shall be declared “out” on each of his subsequent turns at bat during the remainder of the game, unless he is replaced by another team player not already in the batting order.
9. Pitcher-Only Rule: A team may choose at the beginning of the game to declare a player as a “pitcher-only” player. This player will not be in the batting order, but can pitch for the team. Once so declared, this player cannot be added to the batting lineup at any time in the game, and cannot play any defensive position except pitcher. If the player is removed from the game (i.e., another player comes in to pitch), the “pitcher-only” player may not return to the game.
10. Ball and Strike Count:
- Except for M-1, this league uses the standard four balls/three strikes format (e.g. “Full Count”)
 - M-1 will use a 3-2 count (batter starts with 1 ball and 1 strike).
 - If M-1 is combined with other divisions, the 4-3 count will be used (unless both managers agree to a 3-2 count)
 - When games are running behind and both managers agree, teams may go to a 3-2 count.
This can be done at any time, as long as both managers agree.
 - One courtesy foul ball is allowed
after the batter has 2 strikes when the 4-3 count is used, and
after the batter has 1 strike when the 3-2 count is used.
11. Home Run Rule
- Three (3) home runs are allowed per team per game for the upper divisions [**M-1** through **M-3**, and **MS-1**]
 - Two (2) home runs are allowed per team per game for the lower divisions [**M-4** through **M-6** and **MS-2**].
 - If upper divisions are combined with lower divisions, the lower division home run rule will be used. (e.g. one Men's Sunday division would use the 2 home run rule)
 - All fair, untouched fly balls over-the-fence in excess of the limit will be ruled an out.
No penalty runs will be awarded to the defensive team.
 - Any time the batter is ruled out because of an over-the-fence home run in excess of the limit, the ball is dead and no runners can advance.
 - Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player (while in fair territory) which then goes over the fence will be declared a four base award and is not to be included in the total of over-the-fence home runs.
12. Pitching Distance: In any game, the pitcher will have the option of pitching from the standard 50 foot plate, or from any point up to 6 feet behind the pitching plate that is within the width of the existing pitching plate. All pitching rules that apply to the pitcher's actions before and during the release of the pitch with the exception of the pivot foot being in contact with the pitching plate, along with the restrictions on height, speed, etc. shall remain in effect, including:
- The pitcher must present the ball in front of his/her body for at least one second with at least one foot stationary in contact with the pitching rubber (or virtual pitching rubber) before delivering, and must maintain contact during delivery. (i.e., he/she may not be walking (or sliding) forward, backward, etc., while releasing the pitch)
(Rule 6, sec. 4, effect A).
 - The pitcher must release the pitch within 5 seconds of receiving the ball and the batter being in position in the batter's box (Rule 6, sec. 4, effect F).



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13. Pitch Arc: The standard USSSA pitch arc rule is in effect (i.e., pitched balls must arc a minimum of 3' from the point of release to a maximum of 10' from the ground).
NOTE: The 6'-12' (from the ground) arc previously enforced for coed in the BB/SAA league is no longer in effect.
14. Defensive Substitutions Unlimited substitutions are permitted in the defensive line-up. If a player is removed from the defensive line-up but remains in the batting order, he may later return to any position in the defensive line-up.
15. Courtesy runners will be allowed. There is no limit on how many courtesy runners are allowed or when their need is declared, but please respect the purpose of this rule (to allow partially injured players to play, rather than to give a competitive advantage).

When a player needing a courtesy runner reaches base, the player to replace him/her shall be the player of the same gender (co-ed only) **that is closest in the lineup batting previous to the current player that is not already on base (not the last out)**. If that player needs a courtesy runner, keep going backwards in the lineup until a suitable courtesy runner is found. If a player's turn to bat comes while he/she is on base, apply the same courtesy runner rules for him/her to allow the player to bat.

16. 10-Run Rule: If the home team is ahead by 10 (12 for M-1) or more runs after 4.5 or 5 innings, or, if the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs after 5 complete innings, the game shall end and the team that is ahead shall be the winner. If M-1 is mixed with other divisions, the 10 run rule is used.
17. Special Rules: No stealing, bunting, half-swinging, or leading off will be allowed. The runner is out if any of these occur. Sliding will be allowed.
18. Ground Rules for Hidden Valley, Sammamish, and all Marymoor fields
 - a) Everything within fences is in play, with the following exception on Hidden Valley #1. On Hidden Valley #1, all areas (including the bullpen and bullpen benches) that lie behind the fence lines that run parallel to the first and third baselines are out-of-play.
 - b) Over the fence, in the air is a home run (Hidden Valley #3, over the trees is home run)
 - c) The ball bounces over the fence is two bases (Hidden Valley #3, into the trees is 2 bases)
 - d) Lodged under or rolls under the fence is two bases
 - e) Preferred Ground rule on HV1: extension of the fences to make the bull pen benches out of play
19. Extra Innings: Extra innings will be played if the game is tied after regulation play, as long as it is within the time limits. Games tied after the time limit will be counted as a tie.
20. Flip Flop Rule The "flip-flop" rule (USSSA rule 4, sec. 3, effect F) will **not** be used in league games. The rule may be used, though, if both managers agree to it at any point before or during the game.
The purpose for excluding this is merely for simplification and to avoid confusion.

League Eligibility and Administration

21. Player Eligibility: Anyone 18 years of age or older, prior to the first league game, is eligible to participate.
22. Women
NOTE: Women are encouraged to play in the coed league, but are not excluded from the Men's League. Managers and players must ascertain the skill level for every player on the roster and address safety concerns since concessions cannot be made for gender.
23. Minors: Per USSSA regulations, no one under the age of 18 is allowed in the dugout or on the field.
24. Roster Signatures: Signed rosters are due prior to your first league game and may be changed throughout the season. All players are required to sign a roster, even if they are subbing for a game. Keep a copy of the roster that you have turned in (or a blank one) and have folks sign before beginning play. Send a digital copy to info@bbsaa.org the day following the game.



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Those teams which do not submit their completed rosters by their first scheduled league game will not be allowed to field a team and no refund will be given.

The League is not liable for injuries to any player.

25. Forfeits: A team must have at least eight (8) players (defensively) to start or continue a game. If a team is unable to field eight players within 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of any game, it shall forfeit that game. If a team is unable to field eight players within 30 minutes after the scheduled start time of any doubleheader, it shall forfeit both games.
26. Forfeit Penalties: If a team forfeits three (3) or more games during a season, a penalty clause will be invoked for that team's participation in their next succeeding season.
- 1) A non-refundable penalty of \$50 per game forfeited during a single season due to lack of fielding eight players to start a game will be assessed
 - 2) The team must deposit an additional \$250 as a guarantee that it will not forfeit 3 or more games during the succeeding season.
 - 3) All such penalties and deposits shall be made payable with, and in addition to, such team's league fees for the succeeding season, and any team that fails to pay such penalties and deposits will not be eligible to participate in the league during that season.
 - 4) The \$250 deposit will be refunded to the depositing team if, and only if, the team does not forfeit 3 or more games under this rule during the season for which the deposit is made.
 - 5) If a team forfeits 3 or more games under this rule during such season, it shall likewise forfeit the entire \$250 deposit.
27. Umpires: If the umpire fails to appear, games must be played. The coaches have two options:
- 1) The opposing coaches may agree upon one or more persons to umpire the game (see "Self-Umpiring: addendum at the end of the document), and it shall proceed as an official game, or
 - 2) Call the **USSSA pager number at 206-344-9519** and request that an umpire be sent to the field immediately.

Either way, the games must be started within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time.

Please report the umpire's failure to appear when reporting the scores of the game.

28. No Metal Cleats: No metal cleats or tips will be allowed.
29. Infield practice: No infield practice will be allowed between games.
30. Uniforms: There is no mandatory uniform/hat policy.
31. Lineup. Please provide the manager of the opposing team with your line-up prior to the start of the game.
32. Scores Each team shall provide a scorekeeper and a scorebook. The home team's scorebook shall be the official record of each game. It is the responsibility of the **winning** team to report scores within 48 hours after the completion of the game(s). Scores are to be reported at <http://www.bbsaa.org>.
33. Rainouts or other game cancellations:
- 1) If a game is not started or completed due to inclement weather, darkness, field conditions, or for any other reason beyond the control of the opposing teams, **which shall be the umpire's decision**, it will be rescheduled or resumed if possible (see "Game Guarantee" rule)
 - 2) If the City of Bellevue or King County Parks Department staff has closed the fields and put a "Field Closed" sign on the field, their decision has priority.
 - 3) The umpire will make the decision about field suitability, in the absence of Parks Department staff, once the game has been started.
- Please report any rainouts or cancellations within 24 hours at <http://www.bbsaa.org>.
34. Game Guarantee: Based on each league's original schedule of games, teams will be guaranteed all but 2-4 games in the event of many rainouts or forfeitures.



35. Playoffs: Generally, the top four teams from each division will play in a single elimination tournament after the season ends. Exact playoff structure will be based on team registration and division sizes.
36. Playoff Roster: Only players on the official playoff roster are allowed to participate in playoff games. A team's "Playoff Roster" is defined as the roster that has been submitted to the league no later than the end of the day immediately following the day upon which their sixth double header of the season has been played. You may add up to 2 players to your playoff roster after the sixth double header.
37. Tie-breaking Policy/Procedures for placement:
- Head-to-head competition
 - Run differential in head-to-head competition
 - Coin toss
38. Protests: All protests must be emailed to the board at board@bbsaa.org within two (2) working days after the protested game. The Protest Committee will decide all protests within ten (10) working days, and their decision will be final. The protest fee is \$25 and will not be refunded unless the protest is upheld.

Rules for self-umpiring (no umpire for games) – 2021

In this year of continued COVID-19, we may not have umpires at some, or all, of our games. In order to be able to play games, we have instituted the following rules for teams to self-umpire if an official umpire is not available:

- Teams may designate one individual (or more) to be the official umpire(s) of the game. Managers must agree upon the individual(s).
- In lieu of designated umpires, the following rules will apply:
 - Defensive catchers will call balls and strikes.
 - Safe/out calls on bases will be on a consensus and honor system. For example, if you know you are out on a play to first base, call yourself "Out."
 - If there is no consensus on a play on the bases or home plate, the defensive pitcher will make the call for safe/out.
- The goal for this year is to have softball play available for teams to have fun and be active. Individuals who do the self-umpiring are expected to do their best and be on their own honor system. All participants should respect and honor the calls made by individuals who do the self-umpiring.