

Rules of Play

1. Equipment:

- i. Field equipment, including bases, home plate, balls and bats, will be provided. Players are expected to contribute to setting up at the beginning of games and cleaning up at the end, if possible.
- ii. Softball gloves will not be provided by the league, although a small of extras may be available to borrow.
- iii. The league will provide helmets for pitchers and catchers.
- iv. Softball bases should be placed approximately 60 feet apart. If the condition of the diamond does not permit this, both playing teams must agree on the location of the bases.
- v. Only aluminum softball bats are permitted.
- vi. Pitchers and catchers must wear the helmets provided by the league.

2. Playing Time:

- i. Games will normally be a maximum of seven innings, played within a 90 minute time frame. In May, games will last 70 minutes, and in August will be shortened to 60 minutes in order to ensure all games are played in daylight.
- ii. Normally (in June and July), Game 1 will run 6:30pm to 8pm and Game 2 will run from 8pm to 9:30pm. A schedule will be provided to all players containing start and end times.
- iii. If a team cannot field a lineup of 7 players by the scheduled start time the team may borrow players from teams playing before/after the game. Alternatively, a team that does not have 7 players may borrow players from the opposing team to complete a defensive line-up. The number one priority is to prevent games being cancelled due to a shortage of players.
- iv. Games that are forced to be cut short due to weather, or are not complete within the established playing time will use the score at the end of the last completed inning as their final score.
- v. No part of any game may be played after the sun has set. A game that is cut short due to darkness will use the score at the end of the last completed inning as their final score.
- vi. No new inning may start within 10 minutes of the scheduled end time of a game.

3. Food and Drink:

- i. No alcohol or illegal drugs are permitted on the grounds of the Canadian Mennonite University. Anyone consuming alcohol or drugs (including marijuana) will be asked to leave, as this could result in our playing privileges being taken away.

4. General Rules:

- i. Teams are entitled to 10 defensive players: first, second, and third basepersons, pitcher, catcher, shortstop, 3 outfielders and a rover. The rover must be located in the outfield at all times.
- ii. All present team members will be in the batting order each inning, including innings in which they are not fielding. All players must both bat and field, unless there are accessibility reasons.
- iii. Team captains will arrange a batting order prior to the game. There are no rules about the gendered order of batters in this league.
- iv. The team at bat provides their own pitcher. The safety of all pitchers is a priority in our league. It is strongly recommended that the pitcher maintain a distance from home plate of approximately 45 to 50 feet.
- v. If a hit ball touches the pitcher, the ball is declared dead and the pitch is thrown again. Base runners must return to their previous bases and the pitch count will be restored. Pitchers should do their best to avoid making contact with a hit ball, but safety is the first priority.
- vi. Every batter can receive a maximum of three pitches. All foul balls, wild pitches, strikes and balls count as one of the three pitches. Players who self-identified as *beginners* when signing up for the league may receive a fourth pitch if they choose.
- vii. 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.
- viii. There is absolutely no sliding. Any base runner that slides is automatically out.
- ix. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- x. There are no leadoffs; base runners must wait until contact with the ball is made before running.
- xi. If the batter would like a pinch runner to run in their place when they hit the ball, for accommodation reasons only, the last player who was recorded out may run in their place.

- xii. If a fielder is not involved in the play, they must not be in the way of the base runner or obstruct the base path in any way. Conversely, a base runner may not interfere with a fielder attempting to field the ball.
- xiii. First base has an orange safety base. A batter running towards first base must reach the orange safety bag before the first baseperson reaches the white base in order to be safe. A “force out” will always be in effect between home plate and first base: the defensive player only has to touch their base and not tag the runner to achieve an out.
- xiv. If they have tagged the orange side of the base, runners can overrun first base and still be considered safe. A player can overrun first base **only**, and they must stay in foul play when doing so. If a batter overruns first base into fair play, they can be tagged for an out.
- xv. In the case of an overthrow to first base (if the ball goes into foul territory), the runner is entitled to one extra base.
- xvi. There is a commitment line halfway between third base and home plate marked with an extra base. Once the runner has crossed this line, they cannot return to third base. If they do, it is an automatic out.
- xvii. A force out will always be in effect between third base and home plate once the runner has crossed over the commitment line. All plays at home are force-outs: the runner may not be tagged once he passes the commitment line. The catcher must stand on home plate for plays at home. There is no force out at second or third base unless the bases before them are full. Absent a force out, a runner must be tagged to be out.
- xviii. A team can score a maximum of seven runs in one inning, except for the final inning of the game (either the seventh inning or the last inning to be played within the designated playing time). The final inning will not have a mercy rule and therefore unlimited runs can be scored. Both teams must agree in advance when determining that an inning will be the last to be played. Any disputes about this will be resolved by using the score at the end of the previous inning as the final score.
- xix. The Infield Fly Rule (IFR): IFR is in effect when there are runners on first and second, or if the bases are loaded with less than two out. In these situations, if a fair pop-up is hit that, in the pitcher’s judgment is catchable by an infielder with ordinary effort, the batter is out regardless of whether the ball is actually caught in flight. To invoke the rule, the pitcher must loudly announce, “Infield fly” when there is a pop-up in the infield. If this occurs, the batter will automatically be out, even if the ball is not caught. If the pitcher does not announce “Infield fly,” then the IFR is not in place. The IFR does not apply to foul balls, or to line-outs or fly balls in the outfield.
- xx. Foul ball calls should be made the catcher. If the catcher is unsure as to whether the ball was fair or foul, they may check in with the pitcher. Safe and out calls on the

bases should be made by the pitcher. As this league is focused on fun, inclusiveness, and safety, all players must agree that missed calls are a part of the sport and refrain from disputing calls made by pitchers and catchers.

- xxi. A pop-up behind home plate can only be caught for an out if it goes higher than 10 feet. A ball not exceeding this desired height, is considered a strike.
- xxii. A base runner who is hit by a batted ball in fair territory is declared out for interference. This ruling stands even if the base runner is in contact with a base. Any other runners on base at the time interference is called must return to their base. In the case of this type of interference, the batter is awarded first base. There are exceptions to this rule:
 - a) A runner is not out if an infielder other than the pitcher makes a play on the ball and misplay it prior to the ball hitting the runner. In this case the ball is still live after the misplay.
 - b) If a fair batted ball touches two runners, only the first runner is out, as the ball is dead as soon as it touches the first runner.
 - c) A runner is not out if they are touched by an infield fly, so long as they are in contact with a base.
- xxiii. Outfielders must not encroach within 6m (20 feet) of the baselines between first and second or second and third while the ball is being pitched to a batter.
- xxiv. All infielders must remain on or behind the baseline until the ball is hit.

5. Ground Rules:

- i. 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 so there is no confusion.
- ii. The areas behind the backstop, dugouts, home run fences the fences (or imaginary lines) running along first and third base are out of bounds, and a ball becomes dead when it lands there.

6. Rough Play:

The safety of all players is a primary concern. All players should go out of their way to ensure the safety of all players. This rule supersedes all others.