

## PLAYING RULES

The normal rules of Fastpitch apply in Slowpitch **except** as specified in these rules.

### 1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 Appeal Play – A live or dead ball appeal is a play upon which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a member of the defensive team. If made by a fielder, the fielder must be in the infield when making the appeal. The appeal is made at the end of an inning or at the end of a game, the appeal will not be accepted if all players of the defensive team have left fair territory.
- 1.2 Base on Balls – A base on balls permits a batter to gain first base without liability to be put out. If a pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, he may do so by notifying the plate umpire who shall award the batter first base.
- 1.3 Batting Order – The official listing of offensive players in the order in which members of that team must come to bat. The order must alternate between male and female.
- 1.4 Bunting – Using the bat to just block the ball without following through is not permitted. Penalty: batter is automatically out and if there are any baserunners they are not permitted to advance.
- 1.5 Charged Conferences:
  - a) Defensive – When the fielding team requests a suspension of play (Time) so that a member from the bench can speak to the pitcher. Only one defensive conference is permitted in any half inning.
  - b) Offensive – When the batting team requests a suspension of play (Time) to speak to the batter or baserunner. Only one offensive conference is permitted in any half inning.
- 1.6 Chopped Ball – A ball at which the batter strikes downward with a chopping action of the bat so that the ball bounces high into the air. This is not permitted. Penalty: batter is automatically out and if there are any baserunners they are not permitted to advance.
- 1.7 Commitment Lines – These are marked perpendicular to the baseline, half way between second and third base and third base and home plate. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner may not re-cross it in the direction of second or third base, but must continue to third base or home plate. (Refer to diagram 1, page 4) Penalty: baserunner is out.
- 1.8 Defensive Team – The team in the field.
- 1.9 Double Base (Safety Base) – This may be used at first base. If the double base is used and there is a play on the runner going to first base, the runner must touch the orange part of the base and the fielder must touch the white part of the base.
- 1.10 Dropped Third Strike Rule – This rule does not apply in slowpitch. (Whether the catcher catches the ball on the full or not the batter is out.)
- 1.11 Fair Ball – A batted ball that:

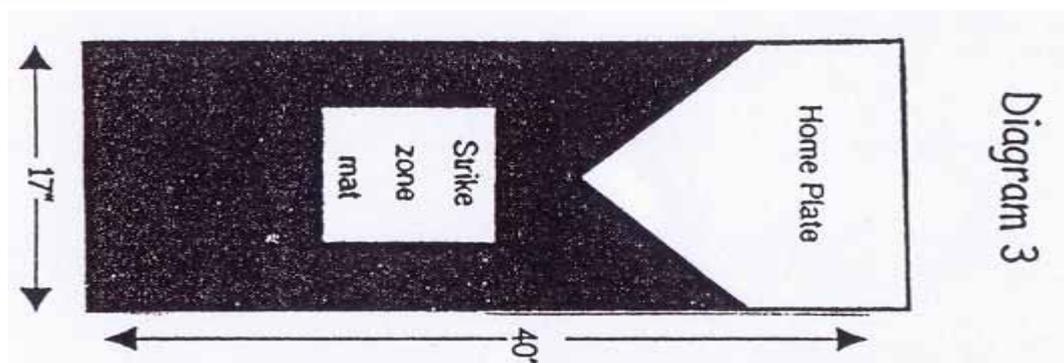
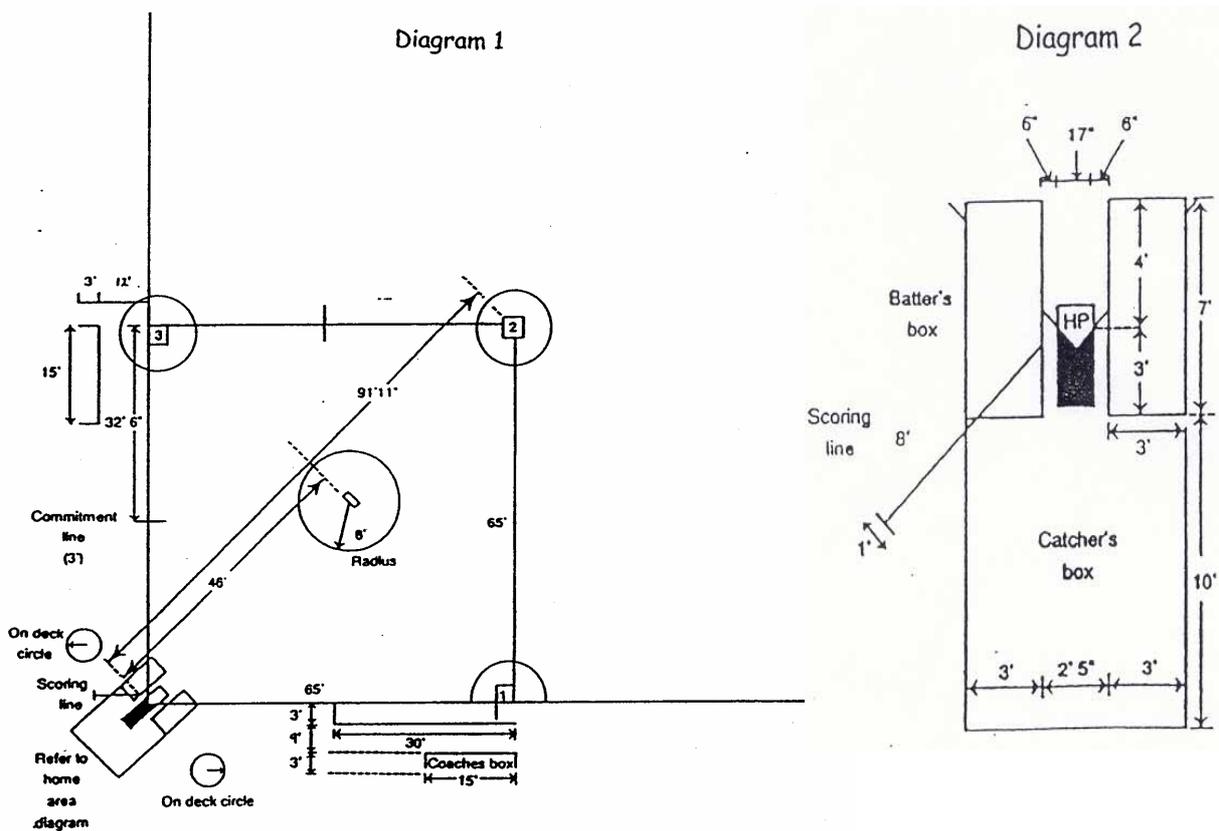
- a) Stops or is touched on or over fair territory between home plate and first base or home plate and third base.
  - b) Bounds past first or third base on or over fair territory.
  - c) Touches any base.
  - d) While on or over fair territory touches an umpire (including clothing)
  - e) First falls onto fair territory past first base and third base.
- 1.12 Force Plays – All plays in slowpitch are force plays. No tagging is permitted.
- 1.13 Forced Runner – A baserunner who is compelled, by the batter hitting a fair ball, to advance to the next base. A forced baserunner may only be played out at the base to which that baserunner is forced to advance. There is no tagging in slowpitch.
- 1.14 Foul Ball – A batted ball that:
- a) Stops on foul territory between home plate and first base or home base and third plate.
  - b) Bounds past first base or third base on or over foul territory.
  - c) First touches foul territory past first base and third base.
  - d) While on or over foul territory touches a player or umpire (including clothing) or touches any object foreign to the natural ground.
  - e) Touches the batter or bat in the batter's hands while the batter is within the batter's box.
- 1.15 Foul Tip – A foul tip is a batted ball which:
- a) Goes directly from the bat to the catcher's hands,
  - b) Goes no higher than the batter's head, and
  - c) Is legally caught by the catcher. The ball is dead.
- 1.16 Free Runner – A free runner is a baserunner who is not forced to run by the batter hitting the ball or another baserunner. A free runner is played out in exactly the same way as a forced runner. There is no tagging in slowpitch.
- 1.17 Illegal Pitch – A pitch that does not satisfy any one of the conditions in the pitching rule.
- 1.18 Illegal Pitcher – A pitcher who has been removed from the pitching position by the umpire as a result of pitching with excessive speed after a warning.
- 1.19 Inning – An inning is completed when either three (3) outs have been achieved or six (6) runs have been scored. The six (6) run rule does not apply in the last innings.
- 1.20 Offensive Team – The team at bat.
- 1.21 Overthrow – If the ball is thrown beyond the dead ball line past either first or third base, the ball is dead and each baserunner is awarded two (2) bases from the last legally base held, at the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand.
- 1.22 Re-entry of Starting Players – This rule does not apply in slowpitch.
- 1.23 Safety Zones – These are areas around second and third base and a semi-circle (3'1m radius) marked on the fair territory side of first base. The zones are used to remove sliding and tagging from the game. They represent safe ground for the baserunner, who must

- have a foot within the circle before a fielder, in possession of the ball, contacts the base to which the baserunner is advancing.
- 1.24 Safety Line – This line is marked as an extension of first base (see diagram 1, page 4). The runner does not have to touch first base. The runner must have a foot on or over the safety line before the first base fielder touches the base to be deemed safe at first base.
  - 1.25 Scoring Line – An eight foot (2.4m) scoring line shall extend from two feet (0.6m) from the corner of home plate closest to third base into foul territory at a ninety degree angle to the third base line. (See diagram 2, page 4). A foot on or beyond the scoring line shall be the same as a foot down on the home plate for the purposes of scoring a run. Running beyond the end of the scoring line shall be the same as not touching home plate.
  - 1.26 Sliding – There is no sliding in slowpitch. Penalty: baserunner is automatically out.
  - 1.27 Stealing Bases – A baserunner is not permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted. Penalty: the ball is dead, no pitch is called out by the umpire and the baserunner is out.
  - 1.28 Strike Zone Mat – The mat is seventeen inches (48.18cm) wide and forty and half inches (102. 77 cm) long, and includes the home plate marked on the mat. (See diagram 3, page 4). A strike is called by the umpire when a legally pitched ball hits any part of this mat.
  - 1.29 Tagging – There is no tagging in slowpitch. Penalty: baserunner is awarded the base to which he is running.

<h2>2. THE PLAYING FIELD</h2>
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- 2.1 The playing field consists of an infield and an outfield. These two areas, including boundaries, are fair territory. Any other area is foul territory.
- 2.2 The infield is sixty five (19.8) square, with a base at each corner. First base, second base, third base and home plate. The distance from the front edge of the pitchers plate to the rear point of home plate is forty six feet (14.0m). The pitchers plate is in the centre of an eight feet (2.5m) radius circle.
- 2.3 The outfield is in the shape of a quarter-circle, and is the area between the two foul lines. The distance from the rear point of home plate to the boundary should be two hundred feet (60.9m).
- 2.4 Foul territory should extend twenty five feet – thirty feet (7.6 – 9.1m) from the baselines.
- 2.5 The three feet (1m) line is parallel to and three feet (1m) away from the baseline, starting thirty five feet (10.6m) from home plate.
- 2.6 The batter's boxes are seven feet (2.2m) by three feet (1m). The inside lines are six inches (15cm) from home plate and the front line is four inches (1.2m) in front of a line drawn through the centre of home plate.
- 2.7 The batter's box is ten feet (3m) in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and is eight feet and five inches (2.6m) wide.

- 2.8 The coach's boxes are 12 feet (3.7m) from the baseline and fifteen feet (4.6m) long extending from either first or third bases towards home plate.
- 2.9 The on-deck batter's circles have a two feet six inches (0.75m) radius and are placed adjacent to the end of each bench.
- 2.10 The commitment lines are marked perpendicular to second base and third baselines and are halfway between second and third base and third base and home plate.
- 2.11 Safety zone areas are placed around second and third bases and a semi-circle (3'1m radius) is marked in the fair territory side of first base.
- 2.12 The scoring line (8'2.4m) extends from the corner of home plate closest to third base into foul territory at a ninety degree angle to the third base line.
- 2.13 The safety line (3'1m) extends from the front edge of first base into foul territory at a ninety degree angle to the first baseline.
- 2.14 The strike zone mat is seventeen inches (48.28cm) wide and forty and a half inches (102.77cm) long, measure from the end of the mat to the tip of each side that joins the back edge of home plate.

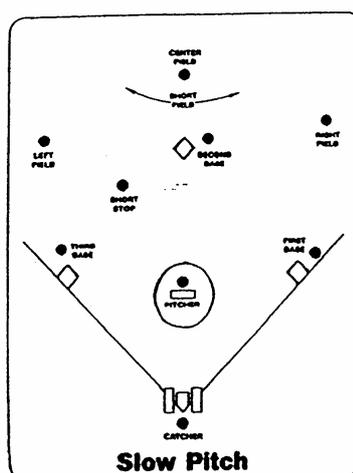


### 3. EQUIPMENT

- 3.1 Only official softball bats may be used. No baseball bats are permitted Penalty: batter is automatically out.
- 3.2 A twelve inch leather official softball will be used. Alternatively a twelve inch incrediball may be used.
- 3.3 Masks must be worn by catchers. No other protective equipment is required.
- 3.4 The plate umpire may wear a mask.
- 3.5 Shoes must be worn by all players. Metal cleats and shoes with screw in studs are not permitted.
- 3.6 Gloves must be used by players.
- 3.7 Helmets must be worn by batters and baserunners. *This is a new rule for the 2003 season and may not be enforced.*
- 3.8 All players on a team shall wear playing tops alike in colour and trim. The pants, shorts or knickerbockers do not have to be the same.
- 3.9 A number is not required on a players playing top in slowpitch.

### 4. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- 4.1 A team shall consist of ten players, five females and five males. A minimum of four males and four females are required to start a game. Other players may be put into the game if they arrive after the game has started.
- 4.2 The players' positions shall be pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, shortstop, left outfielder, centre outfielder and right outfielder.
- 4.3 There shall be a minimum of two females in the infield and two females in the outfield.
- 4.4 The designated hitter is not used in slowpitch.
- 4.5 An extra player (EP) will not be used in this competition.
- 4.6 Substitutions are permitted without restrictions. The re-entry rule does not apply in slowpitch.
- 4.7 When a team has a full complement of players, five females and five males must be on the diamond and in the batting line up at all times.
- 4.8 When a substitute enters the game they must play at least one complete innings, for example, one turn at batting and one turn at fielding.

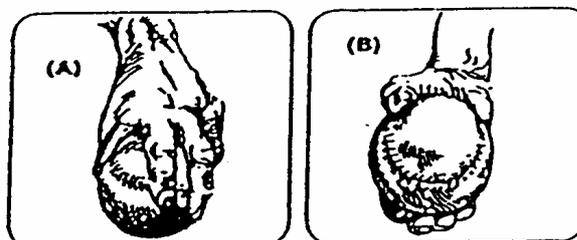


## 5. THE GAME

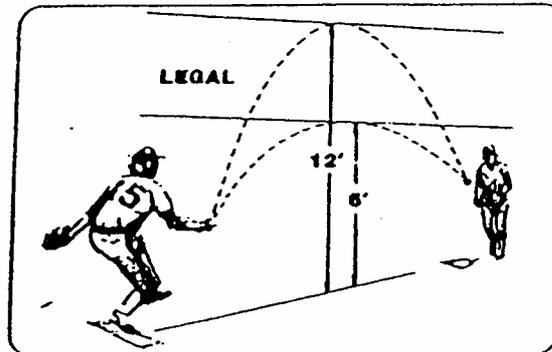
- 5.1 The choice of first or last bat in a game shall be decided by the toss of a coin at the beginning of the game.
- 5.2 One team bats (offence) for an innings against the other team who fields (defence). An inning ends when three offensive players are declared out or six runs have been scored, whichever occurs first. The six run rule does not apply in the last innings.
- 5.3 A regulation game is seven innings or ninety minutes, whichever occurs first. No innings shall start within five minutes of the scheduled finishing time, but an innings in progress will continue until completed or until time has elapsed, whichever occurs first.
- 5.4 A run is scored each time a runner legally rounds all three bases and passes home plate by crossing the scoring line.
- 5.5 A run shall not be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:
  - a) The batter being put out before legally touching first base;
  - b) A runner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner;
  - c) A runner leaving a base before the ball is hit.
- 5.6 No run may score after the third out of an inning.
- 5.7 No run may score after the sixth run has been scored in an inning. Except for the last inning when the six run rule is not in play.
- 5.8 The winner of the game shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game.
- 5.9 Only one charged conference is permitted between a team representative from the bench and a batter or baserunner in an inning. Penalty: team member insisting on the second conference is removed from the game. They may stay on the bench but they are not permitted to play.
- 5.10 Only one charged conference is permitted between a team representative from the bench and the pitcher in an inning. Penalty: pitcher is removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

## 6. PITCHING

- 6.1 The pitcher must have at least one foot (but two are permitted) in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- 6.2 The pitcher is not required to take a step when delivering the pitch. If a step is taken, it can be forward, backward or sideways.
- 6.3 The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- 6.4 The ball must be delivered in an underarm motion and released at a moderate speed. The hand must be below the hip. The pitcher can release the ball with his palm on top (A) or under (B) the ball.



- 6.5 The ball must be pitched on an arc and during its arc; the ball must travel at least six feet (1.82m), but no higher than twelve feet (3.64m), above the ground.



- 6.6 The pitcher must release the ball on the first forward swing of the arm past the hip.
- 6.7 The ball is dead after each pitch unless the pitch is hit.
- 6.8 The catcher must remain in the catcher's box until the pitched ball is hit or reaches the strike zone mat.
- 6.9 The penalty for an illegal pitch is a ball on the batter. The ball is dead, baserunners do not advance. If the batter strikes at an illegal pitch, it is a strike and there is no penalty for the illegal pitch.
- 6.10 The catcher must return the ball directly to the pitcher except after a strike out or an out by the catcher. The rule applies with or without runners on base. Penalty: an additional ball is awarded to the batter.
- 6.11 A no pitch is called:
- if the ball slips from the pitcher's hands during the wind up or backswing
  - If the runner leaves the safety zones before the pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate.
- 6.12 The strike zone is designated by a mat seventeen inches (43.18cm) wide and forty and a half inches (102.77cm) long.
- 6.13 In each half inning, only one charged conference is permitted between a team representative from the bench and each pitcher. A second conference will result in that pitcher being removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

## 7. BATTING

- 7.1 The batter must take his position within ten seconds after play ball has been declared by the umpire. If the batter does not enter the batter's box within ten seconds after the umpire calls play ball, the umpire will call a strike on that batter. It is not necessary for a pitch to be thrown.
- 7.2 A strike is called:
- For each legally pitched ball that hits any part of the strike zone mat.

- b) For each pitched ball (legal or illegal) swung at and missed
  - c) For each foul ball
  - d) Note: a pitched ball cannot be called a strike if the batter swings at it after it hits the ground.
- 7.3 The ball is dead on all strikes.
- 7.4 A ball is called:
- a) For each pitched ball not swung at that does not hit the strike zone mat.
  - b) For each pitched ball not swung at that is not the correct height.
  - c) For each pitched ball that hits the batter when not striking at the pitch.
  - d) When the pitcher fails to pitch the ball within the ten second period.
  - e) For each pitch swung at by the batter after it hits the ground.
- 7.5 A ball is dead when a ball is called.
- 7.6 If the pitcher pitches four balls the batter is awarded first base. All baserunners forced by other baserunners and the batter also advance one base.
- 7.7 The pitcher may walk a batter intentionally by notifying the umpire. The batter will then be awarded first base. If consecutive batters are to be intentionally walked, the awards must be administered one after the other and in order. No more than two intentional walks may be administered in any one game.
- 7.8 The batter is out:
- a) When the ball is bunted or chopped downward.
  - b) When the third strike is struck at and missed. (Whether the catcher catches it on the full or not.)
  - c) When the batted ball is foul on the third strike, whether the ball is caught or not. Baserunners may not advance.
  - d) When the ball is hit in the air and caught – in fair or foul territory.
  - e) When the ball reaches first base before the batter.
- 7.9 Batters can stand or move toward the pitcher when the ball is pitched provided they remain within the batter's box until the ball is hit.
- 7.10 If the batter touches home plate while trying to hit the pitch, the batter is out.
- 7.11 A batter hit by a pitched ball is not awarded first base.
- 7.12 A six run rule applies. Once the sixth run scores the batting side retires.

<b>8. BASERUNNING</b>
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- 8.1 Baserunners must remain in the safety zones until the pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate. Penalty: the ball is dead, no pitch is called and the runner is out.
- 8.2 Baserunners may not advance on a foul ball.
- 8.3 On balls hit in the air and caught before touching the ground, baserunners must remain in or return to the safety zones. If they cannot return to the safety zones before the fielding team get the ball back to that base, on an appeal, the baserunner will be called out.

- 8.4 The batter is permitted to overrun first base provided that they make no physical attempt to run to second base. Turning to the left and returning to first base is not making a physical attempt to run to second base.
- 8.5 When a baserunner overruns second or third bases, he may be put out by a fielder playing the base before the baserunner returns to the safety zone.
- 8.6 A baserunner is not permitted to interfere with, or prevent a fielder from making a play. Penalty: the baserunner is out and the ball is dead. All other runners shall return to the last legally held base at the time of the interference.
- 8.7 A baserunner may advance and not be put out when a fielder not in possession of the ball and not fielding a batted ball, obstructs that baserunner from making a base. The runner is awarded the base or bases he would have made had the obstruction not occurred.
- 8.8 There are commitment lines marked halfway between second and third bases and third base and home plate. If a baserunner places a foot on or over this commitment line they are committed to advance to the next the base, except when the umpire calls foul ball or no pitch. In both of these cases the baserunner is required to return to second or third base. Should a baserunner leave a base and go beyond the commitment line on a fly ball before it is touched and the ball is subsequently caught, then the runner is automatically out.
- 8.9 There are areas around second and third bases, and a semi-circle (3 feet/1m radius) marked on the fair territory side of first base. (See diagram 1). The areas are used to remove sliding and tagging from the game. They represent safe ground for the baserunner, who must have a foot within the area before a fielder holding the ball (in either their glove or hand) comes in contact with the base that the baserunner is approaching.
- 8.10 There is a safety line marked in foul territory and in the line with the front edge of first base. The baserunner only has to have a foot on or over the line before a fielder holding the ball comes in contact with first base, to be deemed safe.
- 8.11 The semi-circle around first base is only used when a baserunner is legally returning to first base.
- 8.12 If a fair batted ball is blocked over two hundred feet (60.9m), the batter shall be entitled to two bases. If the batter has crossed a commitment line prior to the ball being blocked, the batter shall be awarded the next base. The award of more than two bases shall be governed by the lead baserunner.
- 8.13 A run is scored each time a baserunner legally touches all three bases (safety zones) and crosses the scoring line. Baserunners only have to cross the scoring line (see diagram 2, page 4) before a fielder touching home plate, has control of the ball in their hand or glove.
- 8.14 The baserunner shall be called out if he touches or crosses over any part of home plate or the strike zone mat.

## 9. DEAD BALL

- 9.1 The ball is dead after each pitch that is not hit.
- 9.2 The ball is dead on a foul ball.
- 9.3 The ball is dead when it leaves the limits of the playing field.

## 10. PROTESTS

- 10.1 There shall be no protests in slowpitch.

**Note:** wherever 'he' or 'him' or their related pronouns may appear in these rules either as words or as parts of words, they have been used for literary purposes and are meant in their generic sense (i.e., to include all humankind, or both male and female sexes).