

BASSA Softball Rules

BAY AREA SENIORS SOFTBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES 2026

The Bay Area Seniors Softball Association (BASSA) plays under the official rules of the Senior Softball USA (SSUSA), except as specifically written in the following BASSA Softball Rules.

1. NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

A. West Division: Normally each team fields ten (10) players.

B. East Division: Normally each team fields eleven (11) players.

C. To begin an official game in the East league, a team must have six (6) of its players present to avoid a forfeit, however, if a team has players missing because they are participating in a Senior Softball tournament, only five (5) of its players need to be present to avoid a forfeit. **In the West Division, the minimum number of roster players to avoid a forfeit is 1 (one).**

2. SUPPLEMENTAL PLAYERS:

Supplemental players are defined as those players who are registered with BASSA; and are not on the roster of the contesting teams for that game. Extra rostered players from the opposing team offered by the opposing team's manager also may be used as supplemental players. To

determine which supplemental players will play, their numbers must be drawn from a pool of available players 5 minutes prior to the start of the game.

A team who cannot field a full team of their rostered players may pick up supplemental players. Normally no more than 4 in the West Division or 5 in East Division however, if the team has players missing because they are participating in a senior softball tournament, they may pick up one extra player.

Supplemental players must be placed at the bottom of the team batting order and placed defensively at catcher, right field, right center field, left center field and left field. If a team is missing all of its known pitchers and believes that none of the team's players who are present could pitch without endangering that player as a novice pitcher, then that team will be allowed to use one of the selected supplemental players who has pitching experience as the pitcher. To this end, if none of the normally selected supplemental players has pitching experience and there is an available supplemental player who was NOT selected through the normal selection process, then the last selected supplemental player will be replaced by the available supplemental pitcher. If a team has a player who because of incapacity cannot play any position but catcher, he may catch. Supplemental players from the opposing team who are not picked will return to their team.

Should a rostered player arrive after the game has started, and a supplemental player is being used on his team, the rostered player may not enter the game until after the last supplemental player has batted at least one time, and then the team member will replace the last supplemental player chosen in his batting order position (unless the last supplemental player is being used as the pitcher as noted in the above paragraph, in which case the next to last supplemental player selected will be replaced by the team member after the last supplemental player has batted at least once).

Supplemental players will be limited to 1 base on pitches they hit while

batting. Runners in front of him may advance only 1 base. All base runners are at risk of being put out until time is called, exactly as they would be if the batter was not a supplemental player.

No more than 6 supplemental players in East Division may be used by a team who cannot field a full team of their rostered players due to rostered players participating in a Senior Softball tournament. In this situation, left field becomes an additional supplemental player position. For the West Division, supplemental players are used to field a team to play provided 1 player from the team is present at game time, thus avoiding a forfeit.

Should a team be unable to field a full team of rostered players due to an injury to a player while the game is in progress, a supplemental player may be used. The supplemental player must be picked by the opposing team manager from available supplemental players; and be placed into a supplemental player position and in the injured player's position in the batting order. If the injured player is the pitcher, and another pitcher is not available on the defending team, all efforts should be made to select a player with pitching experience and the selected supplemental player will take the injured player's position as pitcher. If another player on the team has pitching experience, then the replacement player takes the next supplemental player position on the field.

East Division:

If there are five (5) supplemental players already on the team, the rover becomes a supplemental player position. If additional injuries to rostered players require additional supplemental players to be used, the positions those players must enter in this order of positions: first base, second base, third base, short stop and pitcher.

West Division:

If there are five (5) supplemental players already on the team, first base becomes a supplemental player position. If additional injuries to rostered

players require additional supplemental players to be used, the positions those players must enter in this order of positions: second base, third base, short stop and pitcher.

3. POST DRAFT PLAYERS

Players entering the league after the draft will be designated as post draft players. They will be the first players chosen if a team needs extra players. The selection will be by a meeting of the coaches as to which particular team needs the player, and the coaches will agree (unanimous decision) to assign the player to the team. If all coaches in the division agree, then the post draft player can be assigned to a team under this rule.

In the instance in a less than unanimous decision is reached and the coaches desire to have a “selection drawing” for players, the post draft players will be selected by coaches dependent on the number of players on their roster. For example, when all 4 teams have 13 players, then all 4 coaches will be in the selection drawing for a post draft player. If 2 of the teams have, for example, 13 players and two teams have 12 players, only those two coaches with 12 players will participate in the selection drawing for a post player. If one team has 12 players and the other three teams have 13 players, the next post draft player is automatically assigned to that team.

If the team rosters reach a point where the coaches do not desire extra players because they limit the playing time of others on the team, then post draft players shall not pay and register and will not be assigned to a team. All reasonable efforts should be made to put post draft players on a team.

When playing, post draft players will be restricted to the one base rule but will be allowed to play any defensive position and can be a courtesy runner. Once a post draft player is assigned to a team, they will no longer be considered a post draft player, but a regular player. If they

play for another team needing a player, normal supplemental player rules apply.

4. POST DRAFT TRADES

Coaches may agree to trades among teams only at and on the day of the draft and approval must be given by all coaches in that division. Trades are not to be allowed during the season. However, because there may be an exceptional circumstance that is not anticipated in these Rules, coaches can approach the Rules Committee for an exemption to this “No Trade” rule.

5. DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:

Defensive substitutions may be made at any time. All players must play approximately one half of the game on defense, unless injured in the game. Opposing manager may protest any violation of this rule

A. West Division: A maximum of ten players may play on defense.

B. East Division: A maximum of eleven players may play on defense. Both teams will play with the same number of players on defense unless the managers mutually agree that one team will play short. **When a full complement of 11 players are on the field, at least 4 players shall be “on the grass” in the outfield until the ball is batted.**

6. BATTING

All team members present for a game must be included in the batting order, which means the batting line-up may include more than 10 (West) or 11 (East) players. Managers may or may not play, at their own discretion. This determination must be established at the beginning of the game. However, if a player is injured during the game, the manager may enter the game to make a full defensive team. If a team loses

players during a game, automatic outs for the missing players will not be implemented.

7. COURTESY RUNNERS:

A. On Base: An unlimited number of courtesy runners may be used each inning. If a player tells his manager he wants to run for himself, the manager shall not use a courtesy runner for this player. Each player on the team may be a courtesy runner only once per inning (this once per inning limitation is used up regardless of whether the courtesy runner was inserted as a home plate runner or as an on base runner). Any courtesy runner found running more than once per inning shall be called out. If the courtesy runner is on base when his turn at bat occurs, a declared out is registered at the base and the courtesy runner must go to bat. A courtesy runner may not be replaced by another courtesy runner except for injury causing removal from the game. A runner who is replaced by a courtesy runner may not be used as a courtesy runner in that inning.

Both Divisions: Any player in the game lineup (including supplemental players) may be used as an on base courtesy runner. If in the buffet inning, the batting order rolls over, courtesy runners may be used a second time.

B. From Home Plate: If a player because of incapacity cannot run, the player may have a courtesy runner from home plate if the opposing manager agrees. The courtesy runner must start from a position ten feet behind an imaginary extension of the third base line beyond the home plate and must not start running until the ball is batted. The courtesy runner from home plate is limited to 1 base, but runners in front of him/her may advance multiple bases at their own risk. If the courtesy runner is on base when his/her turn at bat occurs, a replacement eligible courtesy runner will take the runner's place on the base and the courtesy runner must go to bat. This is the only way a courtesy runner from home

plate can be replaced except for injury.

East Division: The courtesy runner can be any player in the lineup.

West Division: The courtesy runner must be the batter who made the last out. If the courtesy runner defined by the “last out” condition is a player who also requires a courtesy runner from home, or has already been a courtesy runner in that inning, then the opposing manager must chose a different eligible courtesy runner to be used. A supplemental player can be a courtesy runner from home plate.

8. SLIDING:

Sliding is legal at first, second and third base. Sliding is not allowed into home. Run through is not allowed except at first base.

9. CONTACT:

The base runner shall avoid contact with the defensive player and may be called out for not avoiding contact. The defensive player should avoid obstructing the base runner; if no play is being made on him. The base runner may be awarded an extra base at the umpire’s discretion if the base runner is obstructed.

10. FIRST BASE:

The defensive player must only use the conventional bag (inside the foul line) at first. The offensive player must use the secondary bag (outside the foul line) at first when a force play is being made at first. The umpire will call the offensive out if the offensive player touches the wrong bag. In all other situations, the offensive player may touch either bag. The secondary bag is no longer in play once the offensive player crosses first base.

A base runner that overruns first base may advance to second base without retouching first base. He may be tagged out once he advances toward second (veering slightly or turning toward the next base during the overrun does not constitute making an attempt to advance; unless a move is made toward the next base).

11. HOME PLATE:

A runner's home plate will be located about eight (8) feet behind the primary home plate along an imaginary extension of the right field foul line. All plays at home plate are force outs. For a run to score, a base runner must touch the runner's plate prior to the primary home plate being touched by a defensive player who is in possession of the ball. A runner will be called out if he touches the primary home plate, the extension mat, or jumps over either.

All runners are subject to being forced out at home plate after crossing a line, which is 20 feet 7 inches from home plate and extends at a right angle to the third base line. After crossing the line, a runner cannot return to third base.

12. OVERTHROWS:

Overthrows into DEAD BALL territory shall result in all the runners being awarded the base the player is going to plus one base at the time of the throw. DEAD BALL territory includes dugouts, beyond the fence, and beyond the backstop. On all other overthrows the runners may advance at their own risk.

BATTING

13. STRIKE ZONE:

The strike zone is defined as a mat seventeen (19) inches wide and thirty-two and one half (32.5) inches in length. The mat will completely cover home plate and extend back towards the catcher. Legal pitches striking any portion of the mat will be called strikes. Legal pitches are those which have a minimum height of six (6) feet and a maximum height of twelve (12) feet.

Batters will start with a count of 1 ball and 1 strike. When the count reaches two strikes, a single courtesy foul will be allowed. A second foul ball with a two strike count will result in the batter being called out.

14. WALKS

A courtesy runner can substitute for a batter receiving a walk without the batter touching first base.

15. USE OF A PITCHING SCREEN AT THE MOUND

Use of the pitching screen is mandatory for both East and West Divisions. Any batted ball hitting the pitching screen will be a DEAD BALL and will be considered NO PITCH.

A thrown ball in play hitting the pitching screen prior to time being called by the umpire will be in play, and runners can advance at their own risk.

16. AUTOMATIC DOUBLES:

Any fair ball hit by a rostered player that bounces over the outfield fence, or goes through an opening in the fence, shall be ruled as a ground rule double. All base runners shall advance two (2) bases from the base the runners were at the time of the pitch.

17. AUTOMATIC HOME RUNS:

Any ball by a rostered player clearing the outfield fence in fair territory, bouncing off a defensive player over the fence in fair territory, or striking a foul pole, or pole above the fence in fair territory, shall be ruled a home run.

FIELDING/PITCHING

18. PRACTICE BETWEEN INNINGS:

Infield and outfield practice is allowed before any inning until the time the umpire calls “play ball” or “batter up”.

19. PITCHING PRACTICE:

The starting pitcher will be allowed as many practice pitches as he wishes before the first inning, until the time the umpire calls “play ball” or “batter up”. The pitcher may have three (3) practice pitches before each other inning. A substitute pitcher may have five (5) practice pitches.

20. WARM-UP:

A warm-up during a game must be in DEAD BALL territory.

GAMES

21. STARTING TIME:

All games will start at the published starting time. The umpire may grant a grace period on the start of play with the approval of both team managers.

22. LENGTH OF GAME:

A. REGULAR SEASON GAMES

A regulation game shall be seven (7) inning, although it can be considered a complete game after four (4) innings or after 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead. The time length of a game will be limited as follows: At the end of fifty-five (55) minutes of play, the current inning can be completed, and one additional inning (buffet) can be played.

The East Division:

If a game is tied at the end of the extra (buffet) inning, each team will be credited with one-half a game in the standings.

West Division:

If a game is tied at the end of the extra (buffet) inning, each team will be credited with one-half a game in the standings.

B. CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

The BASSA East and West Division Champions will be determined by OVERALL STANDINGS from the Spring and Fall seasons combined. There would be a championship game ONLY if both teams in a division are tied.

Champion games will be played using the normal scheduled game rules and will be played until winners are determined. Championship games will be 7 innings games. If the game is tied at the end of 7 innings, it will continue until a winner is determined.

In the extra innings of play, each team will start with a tie-breaker runner on second base. The runner shall be the player at bat when the last out was made in the previous inning. No courtesy runner may replace the tie-breaker runner until he has reached third base. If the last batter in the previous inning cannot continue to play because of injury, sickness, etc., the next previous batter will be the tie-breaker runner and each batter will start with one ball and one strike (3 balls, 2 strikes rule).

23. CANCELLED GAMES:

Games may be cancelled because of weather, unplayable field conditions, or other extenuating circumstances with the mutual consent of both team managers. Games will not be cancelled because of insufficient players – these games will be considered forfeits. There will be no cancelled game as a result of a team or players playing in a tournament.

24. SCORING:

MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING

The maximum number of runs that may be scored in any one inning is five (5), with the following exception. There is no limit to the number of runs scored in the seventh (7) inning and extra innings or in the last inning (buffet) as declared by the umpire. A game shall be called complete if one team leads by 20 runs after 4 innings or 15 runs after 5 innings.

25. FLIP-FLOP RULE:

West Division: If the home team is behind by seven (7) or more runs at the end of the five run limited innings, the Flip-flop rule will be

implemented and the home team shall **come to** bat in the OPEN inning. That team will bat to completion of the half-inning.

East Division: If the home team is behind by **ten (10)** or more runs at the end of the five run limited innings, the Flip-flop rule will be implemented and the home team shall come to bat in the OPEN inning. That team will bat to completion of the inning.

If the home team fails to at least tie the score, the game will be called complete. If, in that at bat, the home team ties the score or goes ahead in the scoring, when three outs have been recorded, the visiting team will come to bat in the bottom of the inning. If the game is tied at the end of the OPEN inning, Rule 21 Length of Game rules will be applicable.

Extra innings of play, will be played the same as defined in rule 21 B second paragraph. **In the extra innings of play, the visiting team will bat first.**

EQUIPMENT

26. SHOES:

Shoes with metal spikes, metal plates, or metal cleats on the sole or heel are prohibited.

27. UNIFORM DRESS

Players should be encouraged to wear the sponsor's shirt in all scheduled games.

28. QUESTIONING CALLS:

Only the team managers are allowed to discuss any questionable calls, or

any violations or infractions of the rules with the umpires. The team managers are responsible to maintain decorum from their players; and silence any unruly or unsportsmanlike conduct by their players. The League President will perform the function of Umpire in Charge (UIC) and make any decisions concerning protests due to misinterpretation of rules

29. EJECTIONS:

The umpires may eject from a game any player deemed to be interfering with the progress of the game or behaving in an unruly or unsportsmanlike manner. Players ejected will be required to leave the game and the facilities within five (5) minutes.

Any player ejected from a game will be automatically suspended from his team's next 2 playable games. He will not be allowed to play for another team until after the suspension has been completed. Suspended players playing during suspension will be told to resign from further play until reinstated by the Board of Directors.

30. PROTESTED GAMES:

If a team manager wishes to protest the outcome of a game, he must notify the umpire his team is playing the rest of the game under protest and submit his protest in writing to the League President within 48 hours of the end of the game. The League President will then ask the opposing manager and the umpires to submit their views and positions to him in writing. Once all written positions have been received by the President, he will call a meeting of the Board of Directors to rule on the protest. The Board's decision will be final.

31. MISCONDUCT:

Any misconduct or disruptive actions such as fighting, arguing, and profanity not ruled on as part of the game will be under the jurisdiction of the Board of Directors. Upon investigation of such misconduct, the Board of Directors will determine the appropriate actions to be taken (if any) against the involved participant(s), up to and including banning the participant(s) from further league play if the misconduct is deemed to be egregious enough to warrant that penalty.

RULES COMMITTEE

Players requested rule changes will submit requested rule changes in writing with rationale to their team manager, the league President, or a member of the Rules committee. All rule change requests will be forwarded to the Rules Committee Chairman for compilation and presentation to the Rules Committee for review and appropriate action. Once rule changes are approved, the updated set of league rules will be provided to the League president. All team managers and currently working umpires will receive a copy of the rules.