Playing Rules

Updated 2026

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Article I – EGGSL League Rules

Section 1. Rule Book

1. The current year EGGSL Playing Rules govern all play;.undefined situations default to the current year USA Softball Rules.

Section 2. General League Rules

1. SPORTSMANSHIP IS A MUST!
2. No smoking of any or other use of any tobacco product is allowed by any persons, while performing duties on the playing field and/or in or around the dugout area.
3. No alcoholic beverages will be allowed at any league-sponsored event when players are present.
4. Official record books (score books) must keep record of all games played. **All Teams MUST also have a physical scorebook.** GAMECHANGER shall not be used as an Official Scorebook.
    a. Each team at each game will have a qualified person to keep the record book and that person will sign it.
    b. **All scorebooks shall be made available upon league request for an audit.**
5. Scorebook shall include:
    a. Team Names
    b. Present Coaches Name
    c. Pitchers Names & Innings Pitched
    d. All illnesses, absences, and disciplinary suspensions.
    e. Record that each player on each team has played the required number of innings as defined per division.
6. The home team shall submit the final score, pitchers and innings pitched. **Both scorekeepers and the plate Umpire *must sign each other's scorebook* as verification**.
7. Dugout Assignments:
    a. The home team will occupy the third base dugout.
    b. The visitors will occupy the first base dugout.
8. The home team must prep the game field and secure bases.
    a. Water, Drag, chalk field and measure out pitching distance

9. The visiting team is responsible for field clean up:
    a. Putting bases away, water, drag, filling in pitcher's mound and batter's box.
10. Field preparation must include only the necessary amount of chalk required to mark regulation lines. Excessive application of chalk, including repeated layering or widening of lines beyond standard dimensions, is prohibited.
11. Both teams are responsible for picking up waste in both dugouts, in and around the playing field.
12. No team shall take infield warm-ups before game time.
13. Batting helmets must be equipped with a facemask. A form-fitted helmet for a specific girl must be completely lined; (Air or Schutt) must be worn. Offensive players must wear a helmet while on the field.
    a. A player not wearing a properly equipped helmet when batting will be called out at home plate.
14. All infield players must wear a protective face mask while playing an infield position for **all divisions**.
    a. This includes games and practices
15. Athletic shoes or cleats must be worn at all practices and games.
    a. Metal cleats are allowed for the Majors division **ONLY**.
16. No jewelry will be worn except for medical bracelets, which must be taped securely to the player's arm.
17. Plastic visors are not allowed. Hats are optional.
18. **Cancellation of game(s):** If not previously announced by the Player Agent, the **umpire** will decide cancellation of games due to weather or safety reasons.
    a. The Umpire-in-Chief and Vice President will be notified of all canceled games, immediately.
19. The league will provide a new ball for each game. All Balls must be synthetic covered softball/safety ball or other safety ball. See Article III, Section 1 for size specifications.

    NOTE: *The league may ask for coaches to bring any new softballs that have not been used. Please have them with you in the event one is needed.*
20. All players must wear uniform numbered jerseys of the same color.
    a. If a player is not in the team uniform, the player will not be allowed to play in that game unless the umpire, Player Agent or BMIC **and** the opposing team's head coach agrees *prior to the beginning of the game*.
        - The rest of the player's uniform must be appropriate sportswear.

21. All official game times, excluding 6U, will be 1 hour and 30 minutes.
    a. No new inning after time expires; the **inning** <u>will be</u> finished.
        - ★ VOID if the home team is ahead and does not need their at-bat
        - Daylight Rule in effect.
        - Run Rule in effect.
        - Mercy Rule in effect
    b. 6U games will be 1 hour. No new inning after time expires; the **inning** <u>will be</u> finished.

    <u>Example</u>:If the third out occurs at 1 hour 29 minutes and 30 seconds, a new inning begins and must be completed unless one of the above rules is invoked

22. Head coaches are responsible for their sidelines.
    a. Only positive cheering is accepted by teams and fans.
    b. No noise from behind the backstop that is meant to rattle the batter or pitcher will be allowed.
23. **No coaching is allowed from behind the backstop, <u>including</u> parents**
24. If parents fail to pick up a player within 15 minutes of the end of a game or practice, a first-time warning will be given.
    a. The second violation will result in the player's suspension.
    b. The third violation will result in the player's removal from the team with the consensus from the league President.

Section 3. 6U Division

The purpose of the 6U program is to provide an opportunity for girls less than seven years of age to learn and practice the fundamentals of softball in a **fun and relaxing atmosphere**.

1. No scores or standings will be kept in the 6U Division.
    a. This is a development division that shall stress the instruction of softball skills and the promotion of sportsmanship.
2. All players will be used defensively each inning and will be positioned as follows:
    a. One Catcher (behind home plate)
    b. One Pitcher (near the pitching rubber)
    c. Four (4) infielders (even with or in front of the baseline)
    d. Remaining players as outfielders (beyond the baseline)
3. All players who attend a game will bat once per inning.
4. Players will hit coach pitch before hitting off the tee.
    a. Pitching will be done by an adult with the pitching to his or her own team.
    b. Each batter will be allowed four (4) pitches.
        - A foul ball on the fourth swing will give the player one more swing.
5. If a player fails to make a hit, the tee will be used.
    a. No practice swings are allowed.
    b. The players will be allowed **only three (3) swings** on the tee before returning to the bench.
        - A foul ball on the third swing will give the player one more swing.
6. Base runners may not advance when the ball is dead.
7. Base runners must remain in contact with their base until the ball is hit.
8. Once the ball is put into play, base runners may advance to the next base only.
9. **Base runners will be removed from the bases for any out situation.**
10. When the last batter in the line-up takes her turn, play will continue until all runners score, the defense returns the ball to the pitcher, **or** the defense makes an out on any runner.

11. A maximum of three (3) **defensive coaches** may be on the playing field at once. The defensive coaches are required to be positioned in the outfield and behind the catcher and may not enter the infield during live play.

12. A maximum of three (3) **offensive coaches** may be on the field at once:

    a. One (1) in the first base coaching box,

    b. One (1) in the third base coaching box,

    c. and One (1) either pitching or placing the tee.

    d. These coaches may not touch players during live play.

13. The two (2) base coaches also will be responsible for umpiring the bases.

    a. Any batted ball that strikes the coach-pitcher will be an immediate dead ball.

        - All base runners will return to their bases and the batter will continue her turn at bat.

14. No protests or questioning of play will be permitted.

15. Any head coach, assistant coach or fan who argues, disputes, questions, or voices dissent shall have to sit in the penalty box for the remainder of the game.

Section 4. General Rules Governing 8U, 10U, 12U & Majors Divisions

1. Eight (8) players are required for a game to start. A team may not finish with less than eight (8) players.
    a. When a player must leave a game for any reason, a/an out will be declared in the vacant batting order.
    b. Ejection will result in an out being declared.
2. No player may begin two (2) consecutive games as a substitute.
    a. If a player does not start a game in the defensive lineup (i.e. begins the game on the bench), that player MUST be included in the starting lineup for the following game.
        - Violations of this rule shall be reported to the board by 10 PM of the scheduled game day in which the violation occurred. Upon review, if deemed a Failure to Comply, the next scheduled game will result in a forfeiture.
3. Each player may not sit out more than two (2) defensive innings per game (be a substitute on the bench).
    a. The only exception (other than injury) is in the case of disciplinary action against a player by the head coach.
        - The head coach must notify the umpire, the opposing head coach, and the official scorekeeper of the disciplinary action before the start of the game, and the player agent within 24 hours of the incident.
        - Failure to comply will result in forfeiture of the game.
4. A player *may* be benched for: coming late to games or practices; missing games or practices without permission; improper conduct at games; or any other legitimate reason.
    a. If the player is to be benched, the notification procedure in Section 4.3(a) shall be made.
5. All players present will take their turn at bat, but only nine (9) players will play each defensive half inning
6. Picture Rosters must be provided to Umpires at each pre-game check in.

7. Line-Up Cards are Required to be exchanged each game and must include:
    a. Team Name
    b. All Present Coaches First Initial & Last Name
    c. Player Number
    d. Player Defensive Position
    e. Player, First & Last Name
    f. An “on field” injury is defined as a situation when a player receives the injury on the field (not while on the bench) and is unable to continue play.
        - The injured player’s head coach MUST notify the Board Member in Charge who will personally examine the player and query her on her condition.
        - The BMIC will make the final decision if the player is unable to resume play.
8. All pitchers (regardless of protection status) are limited to two (2) innings pitched per game.
    a. One pitch thrown counts as an inning pitched.
    b. In the event that all pitchers on one team have exceeded the two inning limit, **due to extra innings or extenuating circumstances,** one (1) pitcher may be granted an additional inning pitched.
9. A player will be called out if, in the umpire’s judgment, a bat is thrown that would cause injury to another player or person.
10. Players may enter at the bottom of the batting order upon arrival, up to a maximum of a full playing roster, not later than first pitch of third inning.
11. If a team cannot field the minimum required numbers of players within ten (10) minutes after scheduled start time of the game, that team will forfeit the game.
    a. Standard forfeit score will be recorded.
    b. If both teams are unable to field the minimum number of players, both will record a loss in the League standings.
        - A certified umpire must be present to make that determination.

12. Protests are allowed when a coach believes there has been a misinterpretation or misapplication of a league or softball rule, the use of an ineligible player, or the use of illegal equipment. Protests will not be accepted for umpire judgement calls, including but not limited to balls and strikes, safe or out calls, or fair or foul determinations.
    a. For a protest to be considered valid:
        - The Head Coach or Acting Head Coach must notify the Plate Umpire at the time of the disputed play and before the next pitch, play or attempted play.
        - The BMIC must be notified immediately following the conclusion of the game.
        - A $65.00 protest fee must accompany the protest and be submitted to the BMIC at the time the protest is declared or immediately following the game.
        - A written protest outlining the rule in question and the circumstances of the protest must be submitted to the Board of Directors (League) within twenty-four (24) hours of the completion of the game.
    b. The Protest Committee will review the written protest and render a decision within five (5) days of receipt. The decision of the committee shall be final. If a protest is determined to be frivolous the $65.00 protest fee will be forfeited.
13. The catcher may remove her helmet and mask after the ball is hit.
    a. The catcher **may not** remove her helmet and mask when the batter is attempting to strike the ball.
14. Either head coach may end a game at any time.
    a. The head coach terminating the game will be charged with the loss.
15. If at the end of an inning, and time has expired, or the end of a regulation game and the score is tied, the game will end in a tie.
16. An umpire has the authority to have a pitcher replaced (pulled off the mound) for safety reasons. Safety reasons will be deemed as when the umpire determines that the pitcher has erratic control and the batters are in danger of being hurt. The pitcher may still play in another defensive position.
17. If a batter is hit by a ball, then she is awarded first base (all other runners will advance only if forced). If the pitched ball hits the ground before hitting the batter, then she is awarded first base
18. Each team will have three (3) defensive charged conferences per game. No change in offensive charged conferences (one (1) per inning).
19. Pitchers are only allowed 5 pitches or 1 minute for warm up between innings. (Whichever occurs first)

20. The Run Rule is in effect.
    a. Waived after the Mid-Season Tournament (excluding 8U).
21. The Mercy Rule will be in effect after the Mid-Season Tournament.
    a. Excluding 8U division
22. If a batted ball hits any obstructions in fair territory it is considered a dead ball.
    a. The umpire will then assess the situation and award bases as necessary.
23. If a batted ball hits any obstructions in foul territory it is considered a foul ball and counts as a pitch.
24. Speed up rule is in effect
25. Stealing is allowed for all bases. Base runners must remain on the base until the ball is pitched. Stealing is open for all bases.
    a. Excluding 8U.

Section 5. 8U Division Specific

All General League Rules above shall be in effect, with the following additions:

1. Runners may lead off the base (no more than 15 feet) after the pitcher releases the ball
2. NO STEALING BASES.
3. The Speed Up Rule is in effect.
4. A pitched ball is dead when it crosses the plate, unless successfully swung at and hit into play by the batter.
    a. NO THROW DOWN TO ANY BASE UPON STRIKE.
5. There will be no walks. After the batter receives 4 balls from the opposing pitcher, the offensive team's coach will pitch the remainder of the strikes.
    a. If the batter had two strikes from the opposing pitcher, then she will only get one more pitch from the coach.
    b. If there were no strikes from the opposing pitcher, then the batter will still get three pitches.
    c. A foul ball with two strikes will not be an out. Another pitch shall be thrown until the batter swings and misses or puts the ball in play.
6. The coach pitcher must remain in the pitching circle at the time of the pitch until the play is dead. One foot must touch the pitching rubber.
    a. The player pitcher must also be in the pitching circle at the time of the pitch, to the side or behind the coach pitcher, and only one foot needs to remain in the circle.
    b. If a batted ball hits the coach pitcher, the ball is dead, and the batter continues her turn at bat.
    c. No strike shall be called for the pitch.
    d. While a coach is pitching, during any play, the coach **is not allowed** to coach their players and must stay in the circle.
7. Pitchers must make every attempt to pitch legally.
    a. Illegal pitch will not be called. If in the umpire's opinion the pitcher is gaining a gross advantage from an illegal pitch, then the coach must correct or remove the pitcher.
8. Bunting is allowed on a pitch from the opposing team's pitcher.
    a. No bunting or slapping allowed from a coach pitch.

9. The dropped third strike rule will **not be** in effect.

10. The infield fly rule will **not be** in effect

11. Batters may have the option to take first base.

    a. A ball that hits the ground then hits the batter will not be considered hit by pitch – the pitch will be considered a ball.

    b. If hit by coach pitch, batter will receive another pitch (does not count)

12. Runners must be back on base at time of pitch or out is recorded, hesitation rule in effect.

13. Runners can **only advance one base on a batted ball being fielded in the infield** that has not crossed the 10' outfield line.

    a. Any ball hit to an infielder who has possession and then overthrows the ball **will not** allow an extra base for the runner.

14. Runners may continue advancing while the hit ball is in the outfield.

15. Once the ball is back in the infield and under control--all runners must stop at the next base.

16. When the ball is in the possession of a player inside the 10 foot outfield line, runners may not continue to advance. If two (2) runners are between the same bases when possession is established:

    a. The lead runner will be awarded the extra base.

    b. The trailing runner will return to the last base that they touched.

Section 6. 10U and above Division Specifics

All General League Rules shall be in effect, with the following additions:

1. The infield fly rule will be in effect.
2. Drop-third strike is in effect
3. After the Mid Season Tournament(s) the Run Rule waived.
4. The Mercy Rule is in effect.
5. The Speed Up Rule is in effect.
6. Players can continue to run after hitting the ball at risk of being tagged out or until the ball is in the pitcher's control within the pitcher's circle.
    a. The runner must stop at the next base.

Article II – Field & Equipment Standards

Section 1. Division Standards Table

1. If the base distances or the pitching distance is found to be at the wrong dimensions during the course of the game, correct the error, with no penalty, and continue playing the game. Every effort should be made by the umpire to obtain the correct dimensions.

Division	Ball Size	Pitching Distance	Base Distance
6U & 8U	10 in.	30 FT	60 FT
10U	11 in.	35 FT	60 FT
12U	12 in.	40 FT	60 FT
14U & 16U	12 in.	43 FT	60 FT

Article III – League Tournament Rules

Section 1. Tournament Rules

Each year, the league shall hold two (2) Spring Season tournaments: mid-season and end-of-season tournament for all league recreational teams in each division. Teams may, at their own discretion, participate in this tournament at no additional cost. All league tournaments shall be governed by the following:

1. The mid-season tournament (Bows & Bombs) seeding is based on regular season standings while the end-of-season tournament (Sizzling Slam) shall be based on the mid-season seeding tournament results.
    a. Seeding will be void if a team's performance has been found as fraudulent or "sandbagging" by the Board.
2. EGGSL current year Policies & Procedures and Playing Rules will apply with the following additions/exceptions:

    ***Note**: Game Rules may change prior to each tournament, at the discretion of the Board.*

    a. Anyone not displaying sportsmanship *may* be asked to leave the tournament and *may* cause their team to forfeit their game(s).

    b. Teams entered must consist of only their own EGGSL Spring team players.
        - No "pick-up" players from other teams will be allowed.

    c. The tournament format will be planned as Day 1 - Pool Play and Day 2 - Bracket Play, unless deemed otherwise by the Board.
        - Pool Play games will be played DROP DEAD.

    d. The team listed first or on the top of the bracket will occupy the third base will be the home team
        - If a team remains on the same field from the preceding game, then that team will stay in the dugout currently occupied.

    e. For POOL PLAY the home team will be determined by a coin toss.

    f. For BRACKET PLAY the home team will be determined by bracket.

    g. The Tie Breaker Rule is in effect.

    h. The Mercy Rule is in effect.

    i. The Speed Up Rule is in effect.

    j. Pitching Restrictions for CHAMPIONSHIP ONLY - 4 innings per pitcher.

k. Additional Tournament Rules Specific To 10U & Up:
    - 5 run limit per inning
        - VOID at Sizzling Slam
    - Must slide at home, if there is a play at home.

l. **THERE ARE NO PROTESTS ALLOWED**
    - The only two exceptions are for an ineligible player; or excessive number of innings pitched by a pitcher.
        - These must be addressed to the umpire, and must be before the start of the next scheduled game.

m. No stalling in between innings.

n. No delay of game.

Article IV – Definitions

ALTERED BAT: When the physical structure of a legal softball bat has been changed.

APPEAL PLAY: A play or a rule violation on which an umpire may not make a decision until requested by a manager, coach or player to the BMIC or Umpire in Chief.

BASE ON BALLS: Permits a batter to gain first base when four pitches are judged to be out of the strike zone.

BASE LINE: An imaginary line directly between bases.

BASE PATH: A line directly between a base and the runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting to tag that runner.

BATTED BALL: Any pitched ball that hits the bat or is hit by the bat and lands or is touched either in fair territory or foul territory.

BATTER'S BOX: The area to which the batter is restricted when batting.

BATTER-RUNNER: A player who has completed a turn at bat but has not yet been put out or reached first base.

BATTING ORDER: The official listing of offensive players in the order in which they bat.

BLOCKED BALL: A batted, pitched or thrown ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches loose equipment or any object that is not part of the official equipment or official playing area.

BLOOD RULE: Refers to a player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform and treatment is required.

BOARD MEMBER IN CHARGE (BMIC): The Elk Grove Girls Softball League representative of the day, whom all incidents, reports and umpires should (be) report(ed) to.

BUNT: A pitched ball that is intentionally tapped with the bat, slowly, within the infield.

CATCH/NO CATCH:

1. A catch is a legally caught ball, which occurs when the fielder catches a batted, pitched or thrown ball with the hand(s) or glove/mitt.
    a. To establish a valid catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove control of it and/or that the release of the ball is voluntary.
    b. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arm(s) or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body, equipment or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand(s) or glove.
    c. The fielder's feet must be within the field of play, touching the "out of play" line or in the air after leaving live ball territory in order to have a valid catch. A player who is "out of play" and returns must have both feet touching live ball territory or one foot touching and the other in the air, for the catch to be legal.

2. It is not a catch:
    a. If a fielder, while gaining control, collides with another player, umpire or a fence, or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground.
    b. If a ball strikes anything other than a defensive player while it is in flight it is the same as if it struck the ground.
    c. When a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with anything other than the hand(s) or glove/mitt in its proper place.

CATCH AND CARRY: A legal catch followed by a defensive player carrying the ball into dead ball territory.

CATCHER'S BOX: The area to which the catcher is restricted while catching. The catcher must remain in the box until the pitch is released.

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY: When used in the USA Softball Playing Rules, the term "Championship Play" shall have the same meaning as is assigned to such term by the USA Softball Code.

CHARGED CONFERENCE: When a team representative requests a suspension of play or delays the game for the purpose of delivering a message to another team member, unless the pitcher is removed from the pitching position.

COACH: A person who occupies the coach's box and/or assists in the direction of their team representatives on the field.

COACH'S BOX: The area in which the base coach is restricted to prior to the release of the pitch.

COURTESY RUNNER (CR): Any player who runs for a runner without a charged substitution. The courtesy runner shall be an available player who most recently completed her turn at bat.

CROW HOP: The act of a pitcher who steps, hops or drags off the front of the pitcher's plate, replants the pivot foot, thereby establishing a second impetus, or starting point, pushes off from the newly established starting point and complete the delivery.

DAYLIGHT RULE: In the event that the sun has set and there is no light to allow for safe play, deemed by the Plate Umpire, ALL games must stop immediately. Scores will revert to the previous inning.

DEAD BALL: A ball that is not in play.

DEFENSIVE TEAM: The team in the field.

DESIGNATED PLAYER (DP): The player who is initially on the line-up card in the team's batting order but not in the defensive line-up.

DISLODGED BASE: A base displaced from its proper position.

DISQUALIFIED PLAYER: A player removed from the game for a rule violation.

DOUBLE PLAY: A play in which two offensive players are legally put out as a result of continuous action.

DROP THIRD STRIKE: A dropped (or uncaught) third strike occurs when the catcher fails to legally catch a third strike pitch before it hits the ground. The batter may attempt to reach first base if first base is unoccupied (with less than two outs) or if there are two outs, regardless of base runners

DUGOUT/TEAM AREA: An out-of-play area designated for players and team representatives.

EJECTED PARTICIPANT: A team representative removed from the game by the umpire, usually for an unsportsmanlike act or conduct.

FAIR BALL: A legally batted ball that:

1. Settles or is touched on or over fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
2. Bounds over or past first or third base, which is in fair territory, regardless of where the ball hits after going over the base.
3. While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
4. While over fair territory, an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball.
5. Touches first, second or third base.
6. First falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second or third base.
7. While over fair territory, leaves the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
8. Hits the foul pole.

FAIR TERRITORY: That part of the playing field within, and including, the first and third base foul lines from home plate to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards.

FIELDER: Any player of the team in the field.

FLEX: The player who is initially listed in the tenth spot or the last spot in JO Play when batting more than 9 on the line-up card, and may play any defensive position, and may enter the game on offense only in the Designated Player's (DP) batting position.

FLY BALL: A batted ball, fair or foul, that rises into the air.

FORCE OUT: An out which may be made only when a runner loses the right to the base that the runner is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-runner, and before the batter-runner or a trailing runner has been put out.

FOUL BALL: A batted ball that:

1. Settles or is touched (not caught) on or over foul territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
2. Bounds or rolls past first or third base on or over foul territory.
3. While over foul territory, touches the person, attached or detached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
4. While over foul territory, an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball.
5. First hits the ground over foul territory beyond first or third base.
6. Touches the batter or the bat in the batter's hand(s) a second time while the batter is within the

batter's box.

7. Goes directly from the bat to any part of the catcher's body or equipment and is caught by another fielder.
8. Hits the pitcher's plate and rolls untouched to foul territory before reaching first or third base.

FOUL TIP: A batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's hand(s) or glove/mitt and is legally caught by the catcher.

FRIVOLOUS PROTEST: A protest determined by the Protest Committee to lack a valid basis in rule misapplication, procedural compliance, or factual evidence. Protests challenging umpire judgement calls or files outside of established procedures shall be deemed frivolous and result is forfeiture of the protest fee.

HESITATION RULE: Commonly known as the Look Back Rule (LBR); when the pitcher has possession of the ball within the 8-foot circle, runners off base must immediately return to their base or advance to the next base non-stop. Any hesitation, stopping, or reversing direction results in the runner being called out.

HOME TEAM: The team that starts the game on defense.

ILLEGAL BAT: A bat that does not meet the requirements of an official bat or warm-up bat.

ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL: Occurs when the batter hits the ball fair or foul and:

1. At the time the bat makes contact with the ball, the entire foot is completely outside the lines of the batter's box and on the ground.
2. At the time the bat makes contact with the ball, any part of the foot is touching home plate.
3. An illegal, altered or non-approved bat is used.
4. At the time the bat makes contact with the ball, the batter's entire foot has contacted the ground out of the batter's box and returned to hit the ball while inside the box.

ILLEGAL PLAYER: A player who takes a position in the line-up, either on offense or defense, who does not have a legal right to that position.

IN CONTROL:Control is established when a fielder securely holds a batted, pitched, or thrown ball in their hand or glove for long enough to prove they have complete command of it, with the release of the ball being voluntary and intentional

IN FLIGHT: The term used for any batted, thrown or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object or person other than a fielder.

IN JEOPARDY: A term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

INELIGIBLE PLAYER: A player who does not meet the requirements of the USA Softball Code.

INFIELD: That portion of the field in fair territory that includes areas normally covered by infielders.

INFIELDER: A fielder who defends the area of the field around first, second, third or shortstop areas.

INFIELD FLY: A fair fly ball, not including a line drive or an attempted bunt, which can be caught by an infielder, pitcher or catcher with ordinary effort when first and second or first, second and third bases are occupied with less than two outs.

INNING: That portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three outs for each team. A new inning or half inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning or half inning.

INTERFERENCE: The act of an offensive player or team member, umpire or spectator that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Contact is not necessary.

LEAPING: An act by the pitcher when both feet become airborne on the initial move and push from the pitcher's plate.

LINE DRIVE: A batted ball that travels parallel or near the ground through most of its flight.

LINE–UP CARD: The official document listing starting players, substitutes, and pitchers of a given team.

HEAD COACH: The team representative that must have control of their team at all times on and off the field.

MERCY RULE: Often called the "run-ahead rule", ends a game early to prevent excessive score disparities. A game concludes if a team leads by 15 or more runs after 3 innings, 12 or more after 4 innings, or 10 or more a fter 5 innings (or 4.5 if the home team is ahead).

NON-APPROVED BAT: A bat that does not meet USA Softball specifications or is on the current USA Softball non-approved bat list with USA Softball Certification Mark

<u>OBSTRUCTION:</u> The act of a defensive team member:

A. Who hinders or impedes a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
B. Who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases unless the fielder is:
    1. in possession of the ball.
    2. in the act of fielding a batted ball.

Note: Contact is not necessary to impede the progress of the batter-runner or a runner.

OFFENSIVE TEAM: The team at bat.

ON-DECK BATTER: The offensive player who is scheduled to bat next.

ON-DECK CIRCLE: The area nearest the offensive team's dugout in which the next batter is restricted to before the release of the pitch.

OUTFIELD: That portion of the field in fair territory which is normally covered by outfielders.

OUTFIELDER: A fielder who defends the area of the field that the left, left-center, right-center, and right fielders normally play.

OVER SLIDE: The act of an offensive player when, as a runner, slides beyond or loses contact with a base the player is attempting to reach.

OVERTHROW: A thrown ball from a fielder that goes:

A. Beyond the boundary lines of the playing field (dead ball territory), or
B. Becomes a blocked ball.

PARTICIPANT: A starting player, substitute, Head Coach, coach or other team representative located in the dugout, team area or playing field.

PASSED BALL: A legally delivered pitch that should have been held or controlled by the catcher with ordinary effort.

PENALTY BOX: 150 feet behind Second base, in center Field.

PIVOT FOOT: The foot which must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate prior to pushing off.

PITCHER: A pitcher is a player who has pitched five (5) or more games in one (1) season.

PLAY: An attempt by a defensive player to retire an offensive player. A pitch is not considered a play except as it relates to an appeal.

PLAY BALL: The term used by the plate umpire to indicate that play shall start.

PROTEST: A formal request to review the decision of an umpire's rule interpretation.

QUICK PITCH: A pitch made with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance.

RUNNER: An offensive player who has reached first base and has not yet been put out or scored.

RUN RULE: There shall be a five (5) run per inning rule. As soon as the 5th run is scored, that half inning will end, and the defensive team will take their turn at bat.

Example: If the team at bat has scored 4 runs with the bases still loaded, and the batter hits a ball over the outfielders' heads, the inning will end as soon as the runner from third scores the fifth run. No other runners touching home plate will count towards the score.

SACRIFICE FLY: Scored when, with fewer than two outs, the batter scores a runner with a fly ball or line drive that is:

A. Caught.
B. Dropped by any fielder and, in the scorer's judgment, the runner could have scored after the catch had the fly ball or line drive has been caught.

SPEED UP RULE: If the offensive team's catcher is on base with two outs, that team must replace the catcher with the last batted out as a pinch runner.

STARTING PLAYER: A player listed on the line-up card that is inspected and approved by the plate umpire.

STEALING: The act of a runner attempting to advance during a pitch:

A. Runners can advance once the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

STRIKE MAT: A mat 24 inches long with a V shaped cut out with the edges 12 inches long to fit tight with the point of home plate.

STRIKE ZONE: That space over any part of home plate, when a batter assumes a natural batting stance adjacent to home plate between the batter's arm pits and the top of the knees.

STANDARD FORFEIT SCORE:The official score is 7-0 (representing one run for each inning of a standard 7-inning game) in favor of the team that did not forfeit.

SUBSTITUTE: Any member of a team's roster who is not listed as a starting player, or a player who leaves and re-enters the game.

TAG: A legal tag is the act of a defensive player:

A. Touching a base with any part of the body while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove **or**
B. Touching the runner or batter-runner with the ball while securely held in the hand or glove.

TIME: The term used by the umpire to suspend play.

TIE BREAKER RULE: In case of a tie at the end of the game and/or time limit, a runner will be placed on second base at the start of each team's turn at bat in the extra innings. In the first extra inning, the player scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning will start at second base. If tie is not broken, the second extra inning and succeeding innings, the player scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning, shall start at third base.

TRIPLE PLAY: A play by the defense in which three offensive players are legally put out as a result of continuous action.

TURN AT BAT: When a player first enters the batter's box and continues until the player is substituted for, put out, or becomes a batter-runner.

WILD PITCH: A legally delivered pitch that the catcher cannot catch or stop and control with ordinary effort.

THE PLAYING FIELD: The playing field is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. There shall be a clear and unobstructed area between the foul lines and within the radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate.