



SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL

RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates effected November 2025

Table of Contents

1.	DEFINITIONS.....	2
2.	THE PLAYING FIELD	3
3.	UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT	4
4.	THE GAME	4
5.	PARTICIPANTS	4
5.1	Teams.....	4
5.2	Player Positions	5
5.3	Managers	5
6.	PITCHING	5
7.	BATTING AND BASE RUNNING	6
7.1	Batter	6
7.2	Batter-Runner	7
7.3	Designated Runner.....	8
7.4	Base Runner	8
8.	APPEAL PLAYS	9
9.	DEAD BALL	9
10.	UMPIRES	11
11.	CHANGES IN RULES	12

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 **Absent Batter/Automatic Out** – an unfilled spot in the Batting Order. An automatic out is awarded for each absent batter.
- 1.2 **Appeal Play** – a play or situation on which an Umpire cannot make a judgment unless requested by a Manager or player of the non-offending team. An Appeal Play is different to a request for a Rule interpretation that arises from an Umpire's judgment call.
- 1.3 **Base on Balls** – when the Umpire judges pitches to be balls and awards the Batter 1st Base.
- 1.4 **Base Runner** – a Batter-Runner who has reached at least 1st Base.
- 1.5 **Batter-Runner** – a Batter who has left the Batter's Box and is attempting to gain 1st Base.
- 1.6 **Batting Home Plate** – the part of the Strike Zone Mat which is the shape of a Home Plate.
- 1.7 **Batting Order** – the official listing of Batters in the order in which the players must come to bat. The order must alternate between genders. Male Batters may not fill consecutive spots in the Batting Order. Female Batters may fill consecutive spots in the Batting Order.
- 1.8 **Batting Out of Order** – when a Batter bats in an incorrect position in the Batting Order.
- 1.9 **Blocked Ball** – a batted ball that is touched, stopped, or handled by a person or object not engaged in the game.
- 1.10 **Bunting** – using the bat to make contact with the ball without following through with the swing. Bunting is prohibited.
- 1.11 **Commitment Lines** – lines marked perpendicular to the baseline, halfway between 2nd and 3rd Base, and 3rd Base and Scoring Home Plate.
- 1.12 **Dead Ball** – a ball that is not in play.
- 1.13 **Dead Ball Line** – a line, which is drawn parallel to, and on the outside of the Left Field Foul Line and the Right Field Foul Line.
- 1.14 **Designated Runner** – a member of the Batting Team who runs for an injured player.
- 1.15 **Detached Equipment** – a piece of clothing or equipment that has been removed, accidentally or purposely from the player.
- 1.16 **Double Base** – a base, which is double the width of a regular base, used only at 1st Base to avoid collisions between Fielders and the Batter-Runner.
- 1.17 **Ejection** – decision by an Umpire to remove a player from a game.
- 1.18 **Fair Ball** – a batted ball that:
 - a) stops, bounds, lands on, or is first touched in Fair Territory (within the diamond); or
 - b) touches any base except the part of the Double Base that is in Foul Territory.
- 1.19 **Fake Tagging** – an attempt to retire or slow a Base Runner by touching them with a glove or mitt without the ball. Fake Tagging is prohibited.
- 1.20 **Final Batter** – the Batter who is due to bat last in the Batting Order in each inning.
- 1.21 **First Attempt** – the first chance that a Fielder has to field a batted or thrown ball.
- 1.22 **Force Play** – a situation where a Base Runner **is forced to run to the next base** on a batted ball.
- 1.23 **Foul Ball** – a ball that is hit into Foul Territory. Will count as a strike if uncaught or an out if caught.
- 1.24 **Foul Territory** – the area between the Foul Ball Lines and the outside edge of the Dead Ball Lines.
- 1.25 **Illegal Pitch** – a pitch that does not satisfy any one of the conditions in Rule 6.
- 1.26 **Intentional Base on Balls** – An occasion when a Pitcher elects to put a Batter Runner on base by intentionally not pitching strikes to them. Issuing an Intentional Base on Balls is prohibited.
- 1.27 **Intentionally Dropped Ball** – **where an Infielder intentionally drops a hit ball that potentially can be caught, to create a double play.**
- 1.28 **Interference** – The illegal action of a member of the Batting Team to prevent a Fielder making a play on a batted or thrown ball.
- 1.29 **Momentum Change** – an unnatural change in a Base Runner's momentum which delays a play that may be ordinarily made by the Fielding Team.

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

- 1.30 Obstruction** – The illegal action of a Fielder to prevent or slow down a member of the Batting Team from advancing or retreating to a base.
- 1.31 Overthrow** – a ball that is thrown beyond the Dead Ball Line.
- 1.32 Pitcher's Line** – one of two lines within the pitching circle which are drawn at 40 feet and 43 feet from the back of Batting Home Plate.
- 1.33 Pitching Circle** – a circle, which is 8 feet in diameter, its front apex being 36 feet from the back point of the Batting Home Plate.
- 1.34 Running Lane Interference** – interference caused by a Batter-Runner who runs in Fair Territory after they have hit the ball.
- 1.35 Scoresheet** – the official form that lists both team's Batting Order (with full names) and records the runs and outs scored for each team in a game.
- 1.36 Slashing** – when a Batter hits a hard groundball after taking less than half a backswing. Slashing is prohibited.
- 1.37 Sliding** – when a Batter-Runner or Base Runner deliberately leaves their feet in advancing or retreating to a base. Sliding is prohibited.
- 1.38 Stealing** – an illegal attempt by a Base Runner to progress to the next base. Stealing is prohibited.
- 1.39 Strike Zone Mat** – a mat which incorporates the Batting Home Plate and is placed between the Right-Hand Batter's Box and the Left-Hand Batter's Box.
- 1.40 Tagging** – a tag is an attempt to retire the Batter-Runner or Base Runner by touching them with the ball or with a glove or mitt surrounding the ball before they safely reach a base. Tagging is prohibited.
- 1.41 Touch-up** – when a ball is hit and caught with less than 3 outs, a Base Runner must retouch the base at the time of the hit before they attempt to advance to the next base. This play is required for either balls that are caught in fair or foul territory.
- 1.42 Tapping** – putting the ball into play with an intentionally shortened follow through so that a batted ball travels less than 30 feet from the Batting Home Plate. Tapping is prohibited.

2. THE PLAYING FIELD

- 2.1** The Playing Field consists of an Infield and an Outfield, plus Foul Territory and Dead Ball Territory.
- 2.2** The boundaries for each field are dictated by the Fawkner Park Ground Rules.
- 2.3** Foul Territory shall extend 25' from the baselines, and this distance is marked by the Dead Ball Line. If this distance is reduced by an unmovable obstacle, the umpire shall indicate where the Dead Ball Line is located before the commencement of the game.
- 2.4** The Infield shall be a 60-foot square, with a base at each corner. The bases are to be laid out as per the Diagram of the Playing Field.
- 2.5** The Catchers Box is 10 feet in length from the back line of the Batter's Boxes and is 8½ feet wide.
- 2.6** The Batter's Boxes are 7 feet by 3 feet. The inside lines are 6 inches from the Strike Zone Mat, and the front line is 4 feet in front of a line drawn through the centre of the Batting Home Plate.
- 2.7** The Strike Zone Mat is 17 inches wide and 40 inches long and includes the Batting Home Plate which is marked on the front of the mat. The back edge of the Batting Home Plate must line up parallel with the intersection of the Left Field Foul Line and the Right Field Foul Line.
- 2.8** A Safety Semi-Circle shall be marked on the Fair Territory side of the Double Base.
- 2.9** A Safety Circle with a 3-foot radius shall encircle the centre of 2nd Base and 3rd Base. These are used to remove sliding and tagging from the game.

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

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- 2.10** The Commitment Lines are marked perpendicular to 2nd and 3rd Baselines and halfway between 3rd Base and Batting Home Plate.
- 2.11** An 8-foot Scoring Line shall extend from 2 feet from the back-left corner of Batting Home Plate into Foul Territory at a 90-degree angle to the 3rd Base line. A Scoring Home Plate shall be placed at the end of the scoring line with the straight edge to be placed on the part of the scoring line nearest to 3rd Base and the back point of the plate facing away from 3rd Base. To score a run, a Base Runner must have touched the scoring Home Plate before a Fielder, in possession of the ball, contacts the Batting Home Plate. If a Base Runner touches Batting Home Plate, the run does not score, and the Base Runner is out.

3. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- 3.1** All players are strongly encouraged to wear uniform tops alike in colour and/or design.
- 3.2** Enclosed footwear must be worn by all players. Footwear with metal on the soles is not permitted.
- 3.3** Gloves or mitts must be used by Fielders.
- 3.4** All players may wear extra protective equipment such as helmets, face and or chest protectors.
- 3.5** Only official metal, composite, or wooden softball bats may be used.

4. THE GAME

- 4.1** The Players, Managers, and Umpires have the responsibility of:
 - a)** Ensuring that the Game is played according to both the Bylaws and these Rules; and
 - b)** Upholding the integrity of the Game of Softball and the safety of the participants; and
 - c)** Ensuring that the game is played at a reasonable pace.
- 4.2** The first-named team shall call the toss of the coin prior to the commencement of the game to determine the team who bats first.
- 4.3** Five minutes before the scheduled start of the Game, the Umpire shall meet with the Manager or a designated representative from each team at Batting Home Plate. The Umpire shall remind the Managers of the conditions of the Game, advise the relative Fawkner Park Ground Rules, and will verify that the Managers have correctly filled out the Scoresheet for each of their teams.
- 4.4** One team bats for an inning against the other team who fields.
 - 4.4.1** An inning ends when whichever of the following occurs first:
 - a)** 3 Batters are declared out; or
 - b)** After the player who is named as the Final Batter has completed their turn at bat
 - 4.4.2** The following Inning shall start with the Batter who was next due to bat, or the Batter who did not complete their turn At Bat in the previous innings.
- 4.5** A run is scored each time a Base Runner legally rounds all three bases and touches the Scoring Home Plate.
- 4.6** A run shall not be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:
 - a)** The Batter-Runner being Put Out before legally touching 1st Base; or
 - b)** A Batter-Runner or Base Runner being forced out due to the Batter becoming a Batter-Runner; or
 - c)** An Appeal Play at 1st Base.
- 4.7** The winner of the game shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game.

5. PARTICIPANTS

5.1 Teams

- 5.1.1** Provided that there are not less **than four females**, to start or continue a game, a team shall consist of:
 - a)** A maximum number of ten players; or

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

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- b) A minimum number of **seven** players.

5.1.2 During a game:

- a) Other players may be put into the game if they arrive after the game has started
- b) Pick-up players from other teams or spectators may be used to make up numbers provided they are registered.
- c) Players may be interchanged throughout the game. There is no limit to the number of substitutions that can be made during a game, however, a player who re-enters the game must occupy the same position in the Batting Order as the player that they replace.
- d) All participants, including substitutes, must play at least one complete inning, ie: their team must bat and field, unless they have been injured or ejected.

5.2 Player Positions

5.2.1 The players' positions are Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Base, 2nd Base, 3rd Base, Shortstop, Left Fielder, Centre Fielder, Right Fielder, and Roving Fielder.

5.2.2 At the start of each pitch, the members of the Fielding Team may be positioned anywhere in Fair Territory, with the following stipulations:

- a) The Catcher must be either in the Catcher's Box or within 5 feet of the back of the box; and
- b) The Pitcher must be in a legal pitching position; and
- c) All Infielders and the Roving Fielder must be in Fair Territory and behind an imaginary line that shall be drawn diagonally across the diamond in line with the 40-foot Pitcher's Line; and
- d) The Left Fielder, Centre Fielder and Right Fielder must be in Fair Territory and be stationed at a distance of at least 90 feet from Home Plate at the time that the ball is hit.

5.3 Managers

5.3.1 A team shall nominate a Manager to represent them on the Diamond.

5.3.2 The Manager must ensure that the Scoresheet is completed correctly with full names. The game shall not commence until this is done.

5.3.3 The Manager is responsible for assisting the Umpire to make sure that games are played safely and in the spirit of the game.

5.3.4 Only the Manager may approach the Umpire regarding the interpretation of a Rule.

6. PITCHING

6.1 A Pitcher is entitled to:

- a) 5 warm-up pitches at the start of their turn to pitch; or
- b) 3 warm-up pitches between each inning if they pitched to the last Batter of the preceding inning; or
- c) No warm-up pitches if they are returning to pitch in the same half-inning.

6.2 Pitchers are required to pitch to a minimum of three consecutive Batters, including Automatic Outs, unless:

- a) The end of the Inning occurs before they have pitched to three consecutive Batters; or
- b) They make a request to be changed; or
- c) They are injured or ejected.

6.3 A Pitcher may alternate between the two Pitcher's Lines during the time that they pitch to the Batter but must have at least part of one foot in contact with the Pitcher's Line.

6.4 A Pitcher must deliver a pitch within 15 seconds after the Umpire directs them to pitch the ball.

6.5 When pitching, the Pitcher must have at least part of one foot in contact with the Pitcher's Line at the time that they release the ball.

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

- 6.6 The Pitcher is not required to take a step when delivering the pitch.
- 6.7 The ball must be pitched in an arc, and during the top of the arc, the ball must reach at least the height of the top of the Batter's head, but no higher than 12ft at the point above the ground where it reaches this height.
- 6.8 The ball must be delivered in an underarm motion.
- 6.9 The Pitcher must release the ball on the first forward swing of the arm past the hip.
- 6.10 No Intentional Bases on Balls are permitted.
- 6.11 A Pitcher shall not intentionally roll the ball instead of pitching it in the air.
- 6.12 A Pitcher shall not intentionally pitch or throw at a Batter, Designated Runner, or an Umpire.
- 6.13 A Manager shall not change a Pitcher in the middle of an At Bat unless the Pitcher has been injured, ejected or requests a change.

7. BATTING AND BASE RUNNING

7.1 Batter

- 7.1.1 The team shall bat through the order, as noted on the Scoresheet. The first Batter in the second or following Inning is the Batter who would have batted next in the previous inning or has not completed their turn At Bat at the time of the third out in the previous inning.
- 7.1.2 A ball is called for:
 - a) each pitched ball not swung at that does not land on any part of the Strike Zone Mat; or
 - b) each pitched ball not swung at that is not the correct height; or
 - c) each pitched ball that hits the Batter when not striking at the pitch; or
 - d) the Pitcher failing to pitch the ball within 15 seconds of the Umpire directing them to pitch the ball.
- 7.1.3 A strike is called for:
 - a) each legally pitched ball that hits any part of the Strike Zone Mat; or
 - b) each pitched ball that is swung at and missed; or
 - c) each foul ball (Foul Balls hit on two strikes count as strike three); or
 - d) the Batter failing to take their position in the Batter's Box within 15 seconds of the Umpire directing them to take their place in the Batter's Box.
- 7.1.4 A Final Batter rule applies.
 - a) When the Final Batter in an inning comes to bat, the Batting Team shall notify the Umpire, who shall then notify the Fielding Team.
 - b) The Final Batter receives a base on balls after 10 balls
 - c) A failure by the Batting Team to notify the Umpire that the Batter is the Final Batter before the first pitch of their At Bat shall result in no remaining Base Runners being permitted to score.
 - d) Once the Final Batter has completed their turn at bat, the Batting Team is deemed to have been retired, and all Base Runners remaining on base score. No remaining Base Runners will score if the Batter-Runner is retired before they safely obtain 1st Base, or the third out occurs elsewhere.
 - e) no Base Runners score if the Final Batter is an Automatic Out.
- 7.1.5 A player who substitutes for a Batter who has been injured or ejected during their At Bat shall bat from the count at the time the injured or ejected Batter left the Game.
- 7.1.6 A Batter is out if:
 - a) There is no Batter to fill that place in the Batting Order; or
 - b) They are ejected during their turn At Bat and there is no suitable substitute who can finish their At Bat; or

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

- c) They are injured during their turn At Bat and there is no suitable substitute who can finish their At Bat; or
- d) A different player has taken their place in the Batting Order and has reached 1st Base; or
- e) Three strikes are recorded against them; or
- f) **When the ball is hit fair or foul, they have one or both feet completely touching the ground and completely outside any of the lines of the Batter's Box, except for the line closest to the catcher where one backward step is allowed.**
- g) **If any part of either foot is touching Batting Home Plate when they make contact with the ball, whether fair or foul.**
- h) They put the ball into play with a bat that does not meet the definition of a legal bat; or
- i) They bunt, slash, or tap the ball.

7.1.7 It is the responsibility of the Batting Team to remove the bat from the Playing Field only after the Batter has hit the ball and it is safe to do so.

7.2 Batter-Runner

7.2.1 A Batter becomes a Batter-Runner when they are forced to advance by any of the following:

- a) They hit the ball; or
- b) The Pitcher intentionally pitches or throws at a Batter Designated Runner or Umpire; or
- c) The Pitcher pitches 4 balls to a Batter or 10 balls to the Final Batter. The Batter is awarded 1st Base or 3rd Base in the case of an Intentional Base on Balls.

7.2.2 A Batter-Runner is safe if:

- a) They hit the ball fair and reach 1st Base without being Put Out; or
- b) They are awarded a base by the Umpire; or
- c) A Fielder who either has possession of the ball or is fielding a batted or thrown ball on their first attempt obstructs the Batter-Runner from reaching the Double Base; or
- d) A Fielder not in possession of the ball, and not fielding a batted or a thrown ball, obstructs the Batter-Runner from reaching the Double Base.
- e) They are hit by a thrown ball when they are rounding 1st Base.

7.2.3 A Batter-Runner is out if they:

- a) Hit the ball in the air which is caught by a Fielder who has their feet in Fair or Foul Territory. To be ruled as a catch:
 - the Fielder must have secure control of the ball; and
 - the Fielder must be able to release the ball to make a subsequent play if required; or
- b) Hit a fair ball but fail to reach and touch the foul part of the Double Base before a Fielder touches the fair part of the Double Base while in possession of the ball; or
- c) Leave the Playing Field before the Fielding Team puts them out; or
- d) Intentionally interfere with or distracts a Fielder who is attempting to catch, field, or throw the ball; or
- e) Hit a fair ball which bounces and hits their bat while they are in Fair Territory and carrying the bat; or
- f) Leave a bat in Fair Territory after an Infield hit which then interferes with a Fielder's ability to make a play on the ball; or
- g) Run in Fair Territory within 30 feet of the Double Base to prevent a play being made with ordinary effort or run aggressively at the Fielder occupying 1st Base.

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

7.3 Designated Runner

A Designated Runner runs in place of the Batter-Runner.

7.3.1 A Designated Runner may only be used if:

- a) The Batter is injured during the game; or
- b) The Batter is injured during that game's pre-game warm up; or
- c) a Batter-Runner or Base Runner is injured running the bases
- d) The Player has been given permission prior to the game by the League Manager to use a Designated Runner.

7.3.2 Once a Designated Runner is used for a Player, that Player shall not run the bases for the remainder of the Game.

7.3.3 If the Designated Runner is running for the Batter, *they shall situate themselves in a standing position equal to an invisible extension of the third base foul line, to a point outside the catcher's box.*

7.3.4 The Batter shall be declared out if the Designated Runner leaves this position prior to the ball being hit. The Designated Runner shall be of the same gender as the Batter.

7.3.5 Rules 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 apply equally to Designated Runners.

7.4 Base Runner

7.4.1 A Batter-Runner becomes a Base Runner when they have successfully obtained 1st Base.

7.4.2 Base Runners must remain in contact with the base until the Batter hits the ball, *except when a batter swings and misses a pitched ball.*

7.4.3 Base Runners may not advance on a foul ball.

7.4.4 A Base Runner advancing to a base is safe if:

- a) They ground a foot on the outline of or within the Safety Circle before a Fielder, in secure control of the ball, contacts the base to which the Base Runner is advancing; or
- b) They ground a foot on the Scoring Home Plate before a Fielder, in secure possession of the ball, contacts the Batting Home Plate; or
- c) A Fielder obstructs them from advancing to the next base by failing to grant them a clear and unimpeded path to that Base.

7.4.5 A Base Runner is out if they:

- a) Fail to reach the base to which they are attempting to advance; or
- b) Fail to retouch their previously obtained base if the ball is caught with less than 3 outs; or
- c) Intentionally interfere with or distract a Fielder who is attempting to catch or throw the ball; or
- d) Interfere with a batted or thrown ball if a Fielder is fielding the ball with ordinary effort. If in the Umpire's judgment more than one out could have been obtained by the Fielding

Team, the Out shall be given at both bases where the plays would have happened; or

- e) Run in front of an Infielder and are hit by a batted ball before it can be fielded; or
- f) Intentionally touch a live ball; or
- g) Are not in contact with a base and are touched by a fly ball which has not been touched by a Fielder; or
- h) Change their momentum so that an Infielder who is in the process of fielding a ball cannot see the ball; or
- i) Excessively change their momentum between bases. A Base Runner who exits the Safety Circle or Safety Semi-Circle and takes more than two steps then stops may not hesitate for more than three seconds or change the direction of their momentum more than twice with the intention of confusing a Fielder; or

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

- j) Ground their foot on or past the Commitment Line, then attempt to retreat to their previously obtained base; or
- k) Overtake a preceding runner; or
- l) Overrun the Safety Circle and fail to safely return before a Fielder makes a play at that base; or
- m) Slide either in advancing or retreating to a base; or
- n) Run inside the marked lines of the Diamond unless they are attempting to avoid a Fielder, batted ball, or thrown ball
- o) Attempt to steal a base. Stealing occurs if a Base Runner:
 - leaves their base before the ball is hit; or
 - rounds a base, then stops, then recommences running when a Fielder has possession of the ball and has both feet grounded within the Pitching Circle.
 If a Base Runner is called out in this manner with less than 3 strikes on the Batter and 2 outs, the Batter at Batting Home Plate will bat first in the next inning; or
- p) Are subject to an Appeal Play.

8. APPEAL PLAYS

- 8.1** An Appeal Play may occur when a Batter hits a bat with bat that breaches Rule 3.5.
- 8.2** An Appeal Play may occur when a Batter-Runner:
- a) Hits a fair ball but runs to the foul part of the Double Base and steps over it instead of touching it; or
 - b) Hits a fair ball but touches only the fair part of the Double Base; or
 - c) Overruns 1st Base but does not attempt to immediately return to it. An intentional step towards 2nd Base counts as not immediately attempting to return; or
 - d) Reaches 1st Base having batted in an incorrect place in the Batting Order. For the out to be given, the appeal must occur between the time that the incorrect Batter finishes their turn At Bat and the Pitcher pitches to the next Batter.
- 8.3** An Appeal Play may occur when a Base Runner:
- a) Leaves their base with less than 3 outs and fails to retouch the base after a catch; or
 - b) Leaves their base with less than 3 outs and fails to retouch the bases in reverse order if they have advanced more than one base after a catch; or
 - c) Fails to ground their foot in the Safety Circle or Safety Semi-Circle when rounding the bases as the result of a hit or having been awarded extra bases; or
 - d) Crosses but does not touch the Scoring Home Plate when running home.
- 8.4** An Appeal Play may be made on either a live ball or a dead ball and must be made before:
- a) The next pitch; or
 - b) All members of the Fielding Team leave the Playing Field.
- 8.5** All Appeal Plays must be made:
- a) Anywhere on the Playing Field in the case of Batting Out of Order or an Illegal Bat; or
 - b) At the relevant base that the Base Runner missed.
- 8.6** An Appeal Play may be made against more than one Base Runner, provided that the appeal is made at the correct base.
- 8.4.1** If the third out is made on an Appeal Play at 2nd or 3rd Base or Scoring Home Plate, the runs scored before the infraction that led to the Appeal was made shall count.
- 8.4.2** If the third out is made on an Appeal Play at 1st Base, the runs scored before the Appeal shall not count.

9. DEAD BALL

All Dead Balls are immediately dead. Awards and Penalties are as below.

- 9.1** The pitch is nullified, and no bases are awarded after:

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

- a) A pitch is delivered if the Umpire is not in their correct position; or
 - b) The Umpire calls "time"; or
 - c) A pitch is not hit; or
 - d) A batted ball then touches the Batter (or bat in the Batter's hands) while the Batter is within the Batter's Box;
 - e) A pitch is hit foul. A foul ball is called when an uncaught batted ball either:
 - stops, bounds, lands on, or is first touched in Foul Territory; or
 - then touches the Batter, or bat in the Batter's hands when they are attempting to advance to 1st Base but are in Foul Territory.
- 9.2** The Batter-Runner and all Base Runners are returned to the base they last legally occupied at the time of the throw after:
- a) A thrown ball hits a bat that has been dropped or thrown in Fair Territory after the Batter-Runner has hit the ball into the Outfield; or
 - b) A thrown ball hits a Base Runner who has not progressed more than halfway towards the next base and who is not trying to interfere with a thrown ball.
- 9.3** The pitch is nullified, and one base is awarded to all Base Runners after the Pitcher intentionally rolls the ball instead of pitching it to the Batter.
- 9.4** One base is awarded to the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners after:
- a) A batted ball hits an Umpire in Fair Territory before a Fielder can make a play on it; or
 - b) A thrown ball hits a Base Runner who has progressed more than halfway towards the next base and who is not trying to interfere with a thrown ball; or
 - c) A Fielder with or without possession of the ball makes or attempts to make a tag or a fake tag on a Base Runner or a Batter-Runner. Umpire must call "Dead Ball. Tag" If the tag or fake tag is judged by the Umpire to be malicious, the offending player will be ejected.
- 9.5** Two bases are awarded to the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners after:
- a) It leaves the Playing Field as a result of having been thrown or kicked by a Fielder; or
 - b) A batted ball is hit fair into the Outfield and crosses the Left Field Dead Ball Line or Right Field Dead Ball Line.
- 9.6** Three bases are awarded to the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners after:
- a) The Pitcher issues an Intentional Base on Balls; or
 - b) A batted ball is blocked within the Playing Field when a Fielder removes a piece of their equipment or uniform in order to catch, field, or stop the ball, whether it is hit fair or in the Umpire's judgment it has a reasonable chance to become fair. The Batter-Runner is to be awarded 3 bases from the time of when the infraction occurs. The Umpire must signal (but not call) "safe" and call "detached equipment" or "no catch. Detached equipment."
- 9.7** Four bases are awarded to the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners after the Pitcher intentionally throws a pitch at the Umpire, Batter, or Designated Runner.
- 9.8** The Batter-Runner is awarded the number of bases as laid out in the Fawcner Park Ground Rules if the ball is hit fair and contacts the ground then leaves the Playing Field.
- 9.9** The ball is dead when it lodges in Fair Territory in a Fielder's or Umpire's equipment or clothing which is still attached to their person. The Umpire must call "Time. Lodged Ball". One base is awarded to the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners if the ball has not left the Infield. Two bases are awarded to the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners if the ball has left the Infield.
- 9.10** The Umpire must award the number of bases that in their judgment the Batter-Runner and all Base Runners would have reached if:
- a) The ball is blocked; or
 - b) A Fielder is injured during a play; or
 - c) They were not obstructed by a Fielder.

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

NOTE: red text throughout this document indicates updates affected November 2025

- 9.11** The Batter-Runner is declared “Out” and one base is awarded to the Base Runners from the time of the catch when the Fielder places one or both feet out of the field of play after they catch the ball, but before they can voluntarily release it.
- 9.12** The Batter-Runner is declared “Out”, and any Base Runners returned to the base they last legally obtained at the time that:
- a)** A player in an Infield position intentionally drops a ball to make a Double Play with less than 2 outs when a Base Runner occupies 1st Base. Umpire is to call “Intentionally Dropped Ball. Dead Ball. Batter is Out”; or
 - b)** The Batter bunts, slashes, or taps the ball; or
 - c)** A bat that has been thrown by the Batter hits a Fielder or Umpire after they have hit the ball. If the throw is judged to be intentional, the Batter-Runner is ejected.; or
 - d)** The Batter-Runner interferes with a Fielder making a first attempt to field a batted or thrown ball; or
 - e)** A batted ball then touches the Batter (or bat in the Batter’s hands) in Fair Territory after the Batter-Runner leaves the Batter’s Box; or
 - f)** The Batter-Runner slides into the Double Base. If the slide is for the purpose of breaking up a double play, the Batter-Runner and the Base Runner who could have been out on the subsequent play are both out. The Batter-Runner must be ejected if in the Umpire’s judgment the slide was malicious or intended to cause injury.
- 9.13** The Base Runner is declared “Out”, and any other Base Runners returned to the base they last legally obtained at the time that they:
- a)** Change their momentum to affect a play by a Fielder; or
 - b)** Collide with a Fielder who has a foot in contact with 2nd or 3rd Base and is fielding a batted or thrown ball; or
 - c)** Collide with or aggressively run at a Fielder who is standing on Batting Home Plate; or
 - d)** Slide into 2nd or 3rd Base or when retreating to 1st Base. The player must be ejected if the slide was judged to be malicious.

10. UMPIRES

- 10.1** An independent Umpire will be appointed, where possible, to each Game.
- 10.2** The Umpire’s decision is always final.
- 10.2.1** No question will be considered on any rule that requires an Umpire’s decision to be based on a judgment call, but a Manager may question the interpretation of a Rule applied to a decision.
- 10.2.2** Where there is a 2-man Umpire crew, a Manager may ask the Umpire to consult their partner.
- 10.3** Umpires shall not overrule each other on a judgment call. Other league officials who are in attendance shall also not overrule an Umpire on a judgment call. A Manager may ask that the Umpires discuss their interpretation, but they cannot be involved in the discussion. Once a decision has been made and given, the umpiring crew cannot be asked to reconsider its decision.
- 10.4** The Umpire may suspend a game on account of darkness or inclement weather but first need to consult the League Manager where practicable. Any time lost during such suspension is not to be added on to the end of the game.
- 10.5** The Umpire has the power of immediate ejection for:
- a)** A serious breach where the action of a player injures or has the potential to injure the Umpire, another player or themselves.
 - b)** Verbal abuse, audible or visible obscenity, which is directed at an Umpire, League Official, Participant or Spectator.
 - c)** Aggressively or continually arguing judgment calls.

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES of the GAME

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- d) Refusing to follow an Umpire's direction.
- 10.6** The Umpire may declare a forfeit if:
 - a) A team does not have enough players to start or finish a game; or
 - b) A team refuses to take the field within 5 minutes of being directed; or
 - c) A participant physically assaults an Umpire, League Official, Participant or Spectator
- 10.7** There are no protests in Slowpitch Softball.

11. CHANGES IN RULES

Rules 1-10 shall be reviewed annually and shall be changed where appropriate.

Melbourne Softball Association Inc.

Reviewed November 2025

Revised November 2022

Reviewed: October 2020

To be read in conjunction with 1) Slowpitch Softball Bylaws and 2) Fawkner Park Ground Rules