



## INTRAMURAL SPORTS **Softball Rules**

### **1. Players & Equipment**

- 1.1. Each team will consist of (10) players. Teams must have a minimum of eight players present at game time to begin. Teams can be comprised of any ratio of males/females.
- 1.2. If a team starts a game with 8 or 9 players, they may add up to 10 players anytime during the game.
- 1.3. Softballs will be provided by UTC Intramural staff. Teams may not use their own softballs.
- 1.4. A regulation softball bat (must say official softball on the bat) with handle tape, rubber, or leather, is the only legal bat allowed (no baseball bats) and cannot be dented in any way. The Intramural Supervisor has the final call on whether a bat is dented or not. If a metal bat is used, it must have a metal knob.
- 1.5. Players may NOT wear baseball-style caps. Knit and stocking caps are permitted. Players may wear a headband made of non-abrasive cloth, elastic, fiber, soft leather, or rubber. Bandanas and other headgear with knots are prohibited. Rubber or cloth elastic bands may be used to control hair.
- 1.6. No jewelry or any other item deemed dangerous by UTC Intramurals staff may be worn. Any player wearing exposed permanent jewelry (e.g., body piercings) will not be permitted to play.
- 1.7. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material must be covered on both sides and all edges must be lined with appropriate slow recovery padding.
- 1.8. Athletic shoes must be worn by all participants. Rubber cleats on shoes will be allowed. Screw-in cleats will be allowed as long as the screw is part of the cleat. Metal cleats of any kind, open heel and/or toe shoes are prohibited.

### **2. Game Factors & Timing**

- 2.1. Each game will be either seven innings or 50 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning will begin once the 50-minute time limit has expired; however, an inning that has started prior to the 50-minute time limit will be completed.
- 2.2. Teams will conduct their own coin toss, rock/scissors/paper, etc. prior to the game beginning. The winning team will have the option to be the away team (hit first) or home team (field first).
- 2.3. Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 20 runs after three innings or 15 runs after four innings – the game will end via mercy rule.
- 2.4. During regular season games, if the score remains tied at the end of seven innings or 50 minutes, the game will be considered a tie. During playoff games, if the score remains tied at the end of seven innings or 50 minutes, teams will play extra innings until a winner is determined. All rules will remain the same for extra innings.
- 2.5. A game is considered official after four innings. (Example: rain in the middle of the 6th inning, score reverts to end of the 5th inning.)
- 2.6. No time limit will be in effect during championship games.
- 2.7. Substitutions: A substitute may enter the game in place of a starter. This substitute will bat in the same place in the lineup as the starter they are replacing.
- 2.8. Pinch Runners are allowed and must be the last person that was deemed as out.

- 2.9. Stealing and leading off bases are not permitted.
- 2.10. During the game, all equipment must remain in the designated areas.

### **3. Pitching**

- 3.1. Before pitching, the pitcher shall come to a full and complete stop with both feet firmly on the ground, and with one or both feet in contact with the pitching rubber. The ball must be held in the pitching hand or both hands in front of the body. This position must be maintained at least one second but not more than 10 seconds before starting the delivery. The pitcher has 20 seconds to pitch the ball and this time starts when the previous pitch ends.
- 3.2. In the act of delivering the ball to the batter, the pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's rubber until the ball leaves the hand. There are no fake pitches. A ball will be called.
- 3.3. A legal delivery shall be a ball that is delivered to the batter underhand. The pitch shall be what is commonly known as a slow pitch.
- 3.4. The ball must be pitched, with a minimum arc of at least 6 feet from the ground. The ball also must not reach a height of more than 12 feet at its highest point from the ground.
- 3.5. Illegal pitch - The batter has the option to swing at an illegal pitch. Umpire will declare illegal pitch at time of the incident.

### **4. Fielding**

- 4.1. Fielding teams must have a catcher positioned behind the plate, without threat of interfering with the hitter, during each pitch.
- 4.2. An out may be achieved by tagging a base (via force out) or by tagging a runner with the ball below the head/shoulders. Intentionally tagging or attempting to tag a runner above the shoulders will result in an ejection and/or team disqualification.
- 4.3. A total of three outs will complete the hitting team's half of the inning.

### **5. Batting**

- 5.1. The batter starts with a count of one ball and one strike.
- 5.2. The batter will walk when issued three balls or strike out when issued two strikes.
- 5.3. If a batter hits a foul ball with two strikes, they will be issued one courtesy foul ball. An additional foul ball paired with two strikes will result in a strikeout.
- 5.4. Chopping and bunting are not allowed. The batter must take a full swing. Penalty: batter is called out and base runners must return to their original bases.
- 5.5. Any batter who steps on home plate and makes contact with a ball will be called out. These are dead ball outs with no base advancement.
- 5.6. Runners may still tag if a ball is caught in foul territory.
- 5.7. At the umpire's discretion, a player may be called out or ejected from the game for swinging or throwing the bat in a dangerous manner. All runners must return to their original bases.
- 5.8. The offensive team is responsible for retrieving all foul balls and home runs.

### **6. Running**

- 6.1. There will be NO STEALING OR LEADING OFF. Teams will receive one warning for their first violation of this; any further infraction will result in an out.
- 6.2. All ties will go to the runner.
- 6.3. Base runners must maintain contact with their base and may leave it ONLY when the ball is reaches home plate but cannot advance unless it is batted.
- 6.4. Runners over-running bases will be subject to being tagged out; only 1st base can be over-run without penalty. If a runner who runs past first base makes an attempt towards second base, he/she is now legal and free to be put out if not contacting a base.
- 6.5. When the ball is thrown over the fence or out of play, all runners will be awarded one or two bases and the award will be governed by the positions of the runners when the ball left the

fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner. The base to which the runner is running has no effect on the award.

- 6.5.1. When the ball is thrown from the outfield goes out of play the runners get two extra bases.
- 6.5.2. When the ball is thrown within the infield and goes out of play the runner gets one extra base.
- 6.6. Any runner who deliberately runs into a fielder (waiting to make a tag or a force out) will be called out immediately and each runner will return to the last base occupied at the time of the collision. If the runner's act is flagrant, he/she will be ejected. Other runners involved in the play may be called out at the umpire's discretion.
- 6.7. Any runner who is not in contact with a base and is in fair territory when struck by a batted ball and the ball had not passed a defensive player other than the pitcher, will be called out. An immediate dead ball should be called, the runner is out and the batter is awarded first base.
- 6.8. In the case of a possible double play, the base runner must slide directly into the base (rather than the fielder) or get out of the way of the thrown ball or both he/she and the batter-base runner may be called out.
- 6.9. A defensive player cannot stand in the base path or obstruct the path of a base runner unless he/she is making a play on the ball. In the event of an obstruction, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
- 6.10. Fake tags by any fielder are illegal. The penalty for a fake tag is ejection from the game.

## **7. Lineups**

- 7.1. Each team's lineup must be given to the opposing team and umpires assigned to each game before it begins.
- 7.2. If a team is found batter out of order:
  - 7.2.1. While the incorrect player is batting – The batter will be deemed out.
  - 7.2.2. After the incorrect player has batted and before the next pitch – the batter will be declared out and any advancing base runners must return.
  - 7.2.3. After the incorrect batter has batted and after the next pitch is thrown – the at-bat stands.
- 7.3. Any team who begins a game with 8 or 9 players may add the additional player(s) at the bottom of their lineup, regardless of when the player shows up and signs in to play.