

SPORTS LEAGUE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION
Coed 12” & 16” Softball Rules
-WITH STRIKE MAT-



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1. A “strike mat” will be used to determine balls and strikes. If the softball touches any part of the mat on a legal pitch (6’-12’ arc), it will be considered a strike. Pitches touching any part of the plate **WILL BE** considered a strike as well (Because of the small size of the strike mat and the difficulty of pitching, the CSSC has increased the strike zone to include the plate to promote teams to swing more and give pitchers a larger target.) ****IMPORANT CHANGE FOR SAFETY PURPOSES**** The strike mat shall serve as an extension of home plate on all plays at home plate. A runner may touch either home plate or the strike mat to be ruled safe. Fielders are not permitted to obstruct access to home plate or the strike mat without possession of the ball. If obstruction occurs, the runner will be ruled safe. On all close plays at home plate, runners must slide or otherwise avoid contact with the fielder. Failure to do so may result in the runner being called out.
2. All batters will start with a one ball, one strike count.
3. **WALK RULE:** If a male batter is walked in 3 pitches (meaning no strikes were thrown or foul balls were hit) and a female follows him in the batting order, the female has the choice to take a walk or bat. (Exception: *****if the bases are loaded (at the time a male is at-bat) and a male is walked and a female follows him in the order, that female must bat.**) Umps will enforce this rule upon request; however, they will not be responsible for notifying the batter in each walk situation.
4. A batter with two strikes is allowed one foul ball. On the second foul with two strikes, the batter is out. In other words, you are allowed one courtesy foul ball with two strikes.
5. Games will be seven innings or one hour in length, whichever comes first (including warm-up time). The umpire will determine when to begin the final inning, typically with 10–15 minutes remaining, based on game pace and at the top of the inning.

If the game is tied after seven innings:

Extra innings will be played only if at least 10 minutes remain during the regular season. If not, the game will end in a tie during the regular season. Extra innings will follow ‘California Rules’: each team begins with one out and a runner on second base.

The umpire’s decision on time and inning management is final.

6. 10 players (at least 4 females) in the field at all time. (THERE ARE NO POSITION REQUIREMENTS of any players, i.e. there need not be 2 females in outfield and 2 in the infield) You are never allowed more than 6 men in the field at one time. CSSC rules will allow a team to play with a minimum of 8 players (at least 2 females). Teams must field their own catcher.

7. Teams may bat more than ten players; however, these teams must bat the same ratio (3 to 2) of men and women as fielding men and women. If only 2 women are present at game time, each woman must bat twice in the first 10 batters. If a team has less than the minimum required number of players it is up to the opponent and/or umpire as to what is allowable. All players in the field must be listed in the batting order. In situations where additional players wish to bat, the line up must come as close to a 3 to 2 ratio as possible, even if some women need to bat twice in the batting order. *****Men CANNOT bat twice in the lineup to achieve a 3-2 ratio if a team plays with more women than men. Prior to game time, ask your ump for a score sheet. Line-ups must be given to the ump for every game.**

8. There are no guy-girl batting order rules other than the 3 to 2 ratios and the scenario. (i.e. You may bat 6 men followed by 4 women or vice-versa) The batting rules are governed by the number of males in the line-up. examples are as followed:

I.e. 6 men 4 women
7 men 4 women
8 men 5 women (1 out of 4 batting twice if needed)
9 men 6 women (2 out of 4 batting twice if needed)
10 men 6 women (2 out of 4 batting twice if needed)
11 men 7 women (3 out of 4 batting twice if needed)
12 men 8 women (4 out of 4 batting twice if needed)
Etc., etc., etc.
*6 men 2 women (both batting twice) **If playing with the minimum # of people*

9. All teams players in the batting order are expected to play the field. If a player arrives late they will be added at the end of the batting order and teams may need to adjust their lineup in order to maintain the 3 to 2 ratio before getting back to the top of the batting order. In a situation where more women need to bat, it is up to the offense to determine how many and what women need to bat more than once. Teams must space out the order enough so that a situation does not arise where a woman is on base but also needs to bat again. If a team is caught using an illegal lineup (one in which they have not maintained a 3 to 2 ratio before reaching the top of the order), the team will receive an automatic out at the point of discovery and then lineup needs to be adjusted to a 3 to 2 ratio.

10. Game mercy rule: 10 runs up after five complete innings (home team always gets their final at bats when the last inning has been called).

11. There will be a 7 run limit per inning during innings 1-4. (Exception: unlimited runs may be scored if one of the innings 1-4 is declared the final inning of the game.) Unlimited runs may be scored in innings 5, 6, and 7, or in any extra innings.

12. No leadoffs or stealing allowed. Runners may leave the base once the ball crosses the plane of the plate or is hit by the batter. If a runner leaves early, the ball is dead and the runner is declared out. If this is the 3rd out of the inning the batter will be first up in the next inning.

13. Games start on time!!! Teams must be prepared to play.

Forfeit rule: 10 minutes after game time. That 10 minutes is included in the game time. Once teams have the minimum number of required players, the game WILL start. If one team has less than the minimum number of players (8 total-2 females) at ten past the designated start time, the team that is short players will forfeit. If however, the opposing team wishes to allow the team to play with less than the minimum amount of required players, the game may be played as an official game. The opposing team must notify the umpire that they would like the game to be played as an official game.

14. Base runner to defensive player contact will be closely watched by the ump. Any excessive contact or collision will result in an “out” and/or ejection. This includes contact with the catcher. Sliding is allowed – and recommend to avoid contact with an opposing player. Any sliding into a base to break up a double play, or any intentional (in the eyes of the monitor) interference with the defensive player will result in the runner and the batter being called out.
15. NO METAL SPIKES ARE ALLOWED.
16. A foul ball above the batter’s head may be caught for an out.
17. All thrown balls are deemed out of play when:
- The ball is thrown over the fence
 - The ball is thrown beyond the fence
 - The ball is thrown beyond the imaginary line extending from the end of the backstop (if there is no fence).
 - This imaginary line applies to overthrows and caught fly foul balls.
 - See umpire for ground rules in the case that there may be no backstop
 - If the ball is overthrown and hits the fence behind the 1st or 3rd base lines but does not travel out of play, this is NOT considered out of play and the runner may advance, BUT at his/her own risk.
 - On overthrows out of play, the runner is granted the base he/she is going to (at the point of the throw) plus one more base. They will be awarded two bases from the last legally established base. Note: in cases where a base runner runs past first base, he/she must make a clearly aggressive turn towards second base to be granted 2nd and 3rd in overthrow situations.
18. On an infield fly (any fly ball within the infield with significant arc and deemed an “easy catch”) with less than 2 outs and runners on 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd and 3rd, the batter is automatically out and runners can advance, BUT at their own risk.
19. All outfielders must remain behind the chalked and/or coned “outfield line” (*if applicable - consult with your ump before your game to determine if this rule is enforced at your particular league*) when a female is up to bat. In most cases the “outfield line will be determined by where the infield dirt meets the outfield grass. If the “line” is not clearly marked it is up to the umpire’s discretion if an outfielder is too close to the infield. There cannot be more than 7 players on the infield at any one time. Once contact has been made the outfielders may cross the line. If an outfielder crosses the line (an imaginary line, approximately 15ft/5 paces beyond each base) before contact has been made, the female may be awarded first base.
20. In certain facilities a home run rule may apply. (*Consult with your ump and/or CSSC Staff person to determine if a rule is in effect at your particular league.*)
21. Pitching Mound: To increase the safety of the CSSC 12 inch softball leagues the pitching mound will be the distance of 45’ feet from home plate. *This distance will be determined by the umpire before each game.* Pitchers are allowed only one step in any direction off of the mound. Pitching masks are recommended but not required (especially in 12”). We recommend pitchers wear a pitching mask for 12” softball.
22. 5 innings will be considered a complete game. If a game plays for an hour and does not play 5 innings, it will also be considered complete. The home team will always be allowed their final at bat in order for it to be considered complete. (Example: The Home team is leading after six innings, and the game is called in the seventh with the visiting team batting and taking the lead. With the game

being called we would revert to what the result was after the last completed inning after five, which would be the score after six and thus the Home team would win). During the regular season, a game cut short due to weather/lights and less than 5 innings is played, we will replay the game (see CSSC staff for clarity). During the playoffs if a game is called due to weather/lights/darkness we may pick it up where it left off and resume the following week - i.e. same count, same batter, same base running situation (Consult CSSC office for ruling).

23. Due to safety concerns, the Chicago Sport and Social Club have implemented a bat policy for 12” softball only. Participants are still allowed to use any softball bat for 16” softball leagues. All bats for 12” softball MUST contain the ASA/USA Certification stamp:



Bats that do not contain this stamp are ineligible for use in the CSSC 12” softball leagues. Any questions on specific bats can be sent to leagues@chicagosocial.com. Teams that use an illegal bat will receive a warning and removal of bat. A second offense will lead to automatic out and third offense may lead to forfeit (See staff). In addition to that, there are some additional bats that have certification marks but are not approved for use in our leagues:



24. The Chicago Sport and Social Club reserves the right to change or modify these procedures on a case by case basis, if necessary.

25. No Bunting is softball. Bunting is prohibited.

26. In 16" softball women are allowed to wear gloves if they choose. Men cannot wear any gloves (this includes and is not limited to batting gloves, mitts, mittens, etc.).

27. Alcohol consumption is against the law at any Chicago Field or Facility. Please wait until after the game to consume at one of our partner bar. See our staff for a sponsor bar coupon.
28. Please help keep the parks tidy and clean by picking up after each other, cleaning out dugouts and leaving the park better than when you arrived.

LEAGUE POLICIES

GAMES:

During the regular season games are to be played within time allotted (warm up time is included).

UMPS:

An umpire will be provided by the Sport & Social Clubs to supervise the game. It will be the umpire's responsibility to coordinate and run the games, which include the following tasks:

- Starting games on time.
- Calling outs, making final calls on any disputed balls or strikes.
- Settling all disputes or disputed calls.

It is understood that umps will assist in the tracking of the score (i.e. announcing it between innings) and assist in any discrepancies with regards to the coed line-up ratios. However, it is the responsibility of both teams to maintain their respective line-ups and scores each inning.

BAT POLICY:

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FORFEITS:

If your team forfeits a game during the season, the following rules apply:

First Offense: Loss of game.

Second Offense: Loss of game and staff reserves the right to remove team from playoffs.

Third Offense: Removal from the league.

Any team that forfeits more than once also forfeits any guarantee or right to a certain number of guaranteed games.

If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to call our office, at 312.850.8196, so as to help us schedule your opponent a game.

Teams have until **ten** minutes past the designated start time to field a full squad (minimum numbers of players required to play according to the rules). Refer to rules regarding guy/girl batting ratio. Anything less than the minimum must be approved by the staff and opposing team.

STANDINGS:

The updated standings will be posted weekly, displaying each team's rank within its skill level. Rank is based on winning percentage.

PLAYOFFS:

Playoffs will begin immediately following the end of the regular season and will typically last between 2 and 3 weeks. After teams have been seeded according to their records all captains will receive an email or call with the 1st week of playoff game times roughly 3 days before their league. **Teams will not receive a call for any other weeks of playoffs!** It is **ALL TEAM'S** responsibility to check the playoff brackets at the league to find out what time they will be playing the following week if they win. In playoffs it is not uncommon, (and in some cases will be necessary), for teams to have more than one game in a given night. No non-roster players will be allowed during playoffs. All players must have signed the waiver or be on the roster by the second week of the season in order to be eligible for playoffs. All eligible teams will make the playoffs. Playoff eligible teams will be determined on a league by league basis. Teams that have violated the forfeit policy during the course of regular season will not be eligible for playoffs. In certain situations teams at or near the bottom of the standings may not advance to the playoffs. Check with CSSC league coordinator to see if this applies to your league. Playoffs are single elimination.

Seeding: Teams are seeded according to winning percentage, point differential and various other criteria. Teams may be dropped from their regular season level based on the above criteria. Teams may play more than one game per day/night, and/or play games on days/nights other than your regularly scheduled league day/night if necessary.

CSSC reserves the right to schedule playoff games on days other than your regularly scheduled league night or cut the season short, if necessary.

WAIVERS:

In order to participate in the league, each participant must sign the team waiver. Waivers are provided and must be completed and handed in no later than the first night of play. All players must be added to the online roster and fill out the waiver. Players not present the first week of play will still be required to sign a waiver with our staff before participating.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:

A formal protest may be filed before a game if an opposing player's eligibility is in question. The player in question will be required to provide his/her player information (name, address, phone #, signature) in writing to a CSSC staff member prior to the start of the game. This qualifies as an official protest. The game will then

be played in its entirety as scheduled. Teams will be notified of all rulings on the identified eligibility discrepancy. Decisions will not be made on site. If the protest is proven to be legitimate, it will result in the forfeiture of the game in question. Games subsequent to the protested game may be rescheduled.

The above procedure will also apply for any other “logged” protests. All rulings by CSSC staff are considered final.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

The purpose of Chicago Sport and Social Club is to have fun. We hope that all participants keep that in mind when becoming involved. Although the games may become intense, you still can be competitive while maintaining good sportsmanship. With this said, any behavior deemed unacceptable by staff may result in suspension and/or ejection from a game or the league.

STAFF:

To coordinate and run the league, the umpires and/or staff will be available at all times to help the league run as smoothly as possible. If you have questions regarding schedules, policies, rule interpretations, directions to the bar, etc. please ask.

LEAGUE CANCELLATION/RAINOUT:

Please call our weather hotline for the most up to date information on any cancellations (312.773.7100)

Leagues may be cancelled due to existing weather conditions, dangerous or unplayable field conditions, facility constraints, etc. CSSC staff makes every effort to play all scheduled games, thus we will not cancel games until absolutely necessary. Therefore, if you are calling concerning a decision on a cancellation, remember we will not have an answer until close to the start of the league.

If the league is cancelled, CSSC staff will change the voicemail immediately. CSSC will then call all of the captains. If a league is cancelled on site, CSSC staff will attempt to contact those teams still scheduled to play the remainder of the league day/night. Depending on the time of cancellation, some teams will have to be notified on site. If we do cancel, follow next week’s schedule (ex. If April 13 is cancelled teams should follow the April 20 schedule for their next game). The games that are cancelled will be made up at the end of the season if time allows. In extreme circumstances, CSSC reserves the right to run a shortened season without a refund or schedule matches on days and/or other than our regularly scheduled league day/night/location.

PRIZES/ JERSEYS:

Each team will receive a pre-bundled set of colored jerseys with various sizes at the first night of the league. Additional shirts and sizes can be purchased from the CSSC for an additional charge. The top teams in each division will receive a prize of great emotional, spiritual, and most importantly, social value.

These policies are designed to make the league run as smoothly and safely as possible, and provide continuity for its participants. Each player in the league is responsible for this information: please advise your team of these rules and thanks for playing.