

2018 ROSL SOFTBALL OFFICIAL RULES

Royal Oak Sandlot League

Revision: May 29, 2018

1. THE PLAYING FIELD

Section 1

THE OFFICIAL BAT:

- Shall be made of a form of metal or composite material.
- Shall not be more than 2 1/4". inches (6.0cm) in diameter at its largest part.
- Shall have a safety grip of cork, tape or composite material.
- Shall be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer.

Section 2

OFFICIAL SOFTBALL:

- Shall be 12 inches and optic yellow for Junior & Senior Leagues
- Shall be 11 inches and optic yellow for Freshmen League

Section 3

MASKS, BODY PROTECTORS, SHIN GUARDS AND HELMETS (New for 2018):

Catchers must wear a mask with throat protector, helmet with ear flaps, shin guards which offer protection to the knee caps and a body protector. Extended wire protector may be worn in lieu of an attached throat protector. Facemasks are strongly encouraged for Pitcher, 1st Base and 3rd Base. Facemasks are optional for 2nd Base, Shortstop and all Outfield positions. Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a mask with throat protection and helmet with ear protection. All offensive players must wear double ear flap league approved batting helmets. This includes on-deck batter, base runners, and players acting as coaches in the coach's box.

Section 4

UNIFORM:

ROSL ONLY - All players on a team shall properly wear uniforms that are alike in color, trim and style. If because of the blood rule a change is required and the uniform part does not match, the player will not be penalized. All protective equipment should be worn properly. If a player is requested by the umpire to remove jewelry, illegal shoes or illegal parts of the uniform and they refuse, the player will not be allowed to play.

HEADWEAR:

ROSL ONLY - Ball caps, visors and headbands are optional for players. If worn, they can be mixed, but must be worn properly. It is strongly encouraged that visors be worn if player is not wearing a facemask. If one type or more than one type is worn, they all must be of the same color. Handkerchiefs do not qualify as headbands and cannot be worn around the head or neck. Plastic visors are not allowed.

PANTS/SLIDING PANTS:

ROSL ONLY - All players' pants may be long and are alike in color. Players may wear a solid colored pair of sliding pants. It is not mandatory that all players wear sliding pants but if more than one player wears them, they must be alike in color. No player may wear ragged, frayed or slit legs on exposed sliding pants.

UNDERSHIRTS:

ROSL ONLY - Players may wear a solid-colored undershirt (it may be white). It is not mandatory that all players wear an undershirt, but if more than one player wears them, they must be alike in color and style. No player may wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves on exposed undershirts.

NUMBERS:

ROSL ONLY - A whole number of contrasting color, players on the same team may not wear identical numbers.

CASTS/PROSTHESES:

All casts and splints must be padded. Prostheses may be worn. Braces with exposed hard surfaces must be padded. Any of this equipment judged by the umpire to be potentially dangerous is illegal. Any decision by the umpire should be based on whether or not a device worn or used by an individual with a disability changes the fundamental nature of the game or poses a significant risk to the safety of other players.

JEWELRY:

No jewelry is allowed on the players (except medical alert bracelets).

SHOES:

Shoes and socks must be worn Metal and plastic cleats allowed in Senior Division. Plastic cleats only in Junior and Freshman Divisions.

*Section 6***ALL EQUIPMENT:**

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the ROSL reserves the right to withhold or withdraw approval of any equipment which, in the ROSL's sole determination, significantly changes the character of the game, affects the safety of participants or spectators, or renders a player's performance more a product of the player's equipment rather than the player's individual skill.

2. THE PLAYING FIELD

*Section 1***OFFICIAL DISTANCE TABLE**

Division Base length | Pitching Plate Distance -

Freshmen: 60' | 36"

Junior: 60' | 40'

Senior: 60' | 43'

3. DIVISIONS, PLAYER ELIGIBILITY, MANAGERS / COACHES, and SUBSTITUTES

Section 1

- Freshman Division: 11 or under
- Junior Division: 14 or under
- Senior Division: 18 or under

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY (ROSL ONLY):

1. Age as of May 1st of registration year.
2. Team rosters are capped at 15 per team. Teams may exceed roster cap with special permission from ROSL Board Officers.
3. No player shall appear in the lineup of any team in the league without registration in ROSL.

SHORT-HANDED RULE:

To start a game:

- Teams must have at least 8 players to begin game. The game may end with less than 8 players. If a player/s cannot continue for any reason, their spot in the batting order will be an out. If a team is playing one player short and another player becomes injured or ill, leaving the team with two less players than the required number.
- Once a game has been forfeited, the forfeit cannot be changed.

EXCEPTION: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return even after missing a turn at bat.

Failure to have 8 players to start the game will result in game forfeit.

*Section 2***EXTRA HITTER:**

The "extra hitter" as explained in the A.S.A. rules will not be used in ROSL.

*Section 3***RE-ENTRY:**

- Any of the starting players may be substituted or replaced and re-entered provided players occupy the same batting positions whenever in the lineup.

Section 4

ROSL ONLY - MANAGERS/COACHES:

A Manager/Coach is a person who is responsible for the team's actions on the field and he represents the team in communications with the umpire and opposing team.

Managers and coaches must be 18 years old and approved by the league VP.

Managers will be held responsible for:

- The conduct and appearance of players.
- All equipment issued to their team.

Managers/Coaches must be neatly attired or dressed in team uniform in accordance with the color code of the team. If a coach wears a hat/cap, it should be sponsor labeled.

Section 5

DISQUALIFIED OR EJECTED PLAYER OR COACH:

A player or coach who has been ejected from the game is restricted to the bench. A disqualified player may serve as a base coach. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the player or coach must leave the grounds. Any disqualified or ejected player discovered participating in the game would constitute a forfeit.

Any arguing on the judgment of balls and strikes will constitute a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member. If a player is disqualified a team can play shorthanded, however if a player is ejected and the team does not have enough players to continue, the game is forfeited.

Section 6

BLOOD RULE:

A player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgment. Uniform rule violations will not be enforced if a uniform change is required.

The umpire shall:

- Stop the game and immediately call a coach, trainer or other authorized person to the injured player and allow treatment.
- Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution, short-handed player and re-entry if necessary.

4. GAME FORMAT

Section 1

HOME TEAM:

The team designated as home team shall bat last in the inning and occupy the third base side of the field.

Section 2

FITNESS OF THE GROUND:

Solely the plate umpire shall decide the fitness of the grounds for a game.

Section 3

REGULATION GAME:

A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings for Senior and Junior Divisions and; six (6) innings for Freshman Division. Game times are 6:15 pm or 8:30 pm weekdays. Game time limit is two (2) hours for Senior Division, one hour and forty-five minutes (1.45) for Junior Division and one hour and thirty minutes (1.30) for Freshman Division. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if four or more complete innings have been played, or the team second at bat has scored more runs in four or more innings than the other team has scored in five or more.

The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or other cause that place the patrons or players in peril. Games that are not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.

A regulation tie game shall be declared if the score is equal when the game is called at the end of five or more complete innings, or if the team second at bat has equaled the score of the first team at bat in the incomplete inning.

Games that are regulation tie games shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.

Section 4

FORFEITED GAMES:

The umpire in favor of the team not at fault shall declare a forfeited game in the following cases:

- If a team does not have the required amount of players and there is no Umpire, a forfeit will still be called. The winning team will contact the League Vice President.
- Any team member and or spectator physically attack an umpire.
- If one side refuses to continue to play after the game has begun, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
- If a team employs tactics noticeably designed to delay or to hasten the game.
- If, after warning by the umpire, anyone of the rules of the game is willfully violated.
- If the order for the ejection of a player, manager or coach is not obeyed within one minute.
- If the ejection of a player or players from the game results in fewer than the required number of players to continue the game.
- If an ejected player is discovered participating again.

Section 5

CONFERENCE:

Offensive Conference:

There shall be only one charged conference between the manager and/or other team representative(s) and the batter, another team representative, and/or runner(s) in an inning. The umpire shall not permit any such conferences in excess of one in an inning.

EFFECT: Ejection of the manager or coach who insists on another charged conference.

Defensive Conference:

There shall be only three charged conference(s) between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with any defensive player(s) in a seven inning game. For every inning beyond seven, there shall be one charged conference per inning between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with any defense player(s).

EFFECT: The fourth, and each additional, charged conference in a game, or for any charged conference in excess of one per inning in an extra Inning game, shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitcher position for the remainder of the game. The removed pitcher can play another position on defense but cannot pitch again.

Section 6

HOME RUN RULE:

Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player that goes over the fence in fair territory should be declared a four base award. A home run will be awarded for any ball hit over the fence in fair territory.

Section 7

TIEBREAKER RULE:

If, after the completion of seven (7) innings in Senior Division and Junior Divisions, or six (6) innings in Freshman Division, the score is tied, the following tiebreaker rule will be played to determine a winning team:

Starting with the top of the eighth inning, and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the number five batter is the leadoff batter, the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. A substitute may be inserted for the runner.

If a team is in the tiebreaker and the absent player is the one who should begin the half inning at second base, do not declare an out.

Instead, place on second base the player whose name precedes the absent player's name in the line-up.

Section 8

DUGOUT CONDUCT:

Coaches, players, and other bench personnel shall not be outside the designated bench dugout area except when the rule allows or justified by the umpire.

EFFECT: The first offense is a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in ejection of that team member.

5. PITCHING REGULATIONS

Section 1

Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall comply with the following:

1. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.
2. The shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.
3. While on the pitching plate, the pitcher shall take the signal or appear to be taking a signal with the hands separated. The ball must remain in either the glove or pitching hand.
4. The pitcher shall hold the ball in both hands for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing it.
5. As of 2018, MHSAA ruled that it does not matter if pitchers "step back" during delivery.
6. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
7. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without having the ball in her possession.

Section 2

INTENTIONAL WALK:

If the pitcher/manager desires to walk a batter intentionally, pitches four (4) pitches must be delivered to the batter.

The Catcher must go into their crouch between every pitch thrown. Upon pitch delivery the Catcher may rise and accept a called ball outside of the strike zone.

Section 3

CATCHER:

The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitch is released.

Any ball thrown by the catcher to any field position other than the pitcher is considered a live ball. Runners may advance or can be thrown out. A ball thrown back to the pitcher is considered a dead ball or returned ball. Runners cannot advance or steal upon a returned ball to the pitcher.

Section 4

THROWING TO A BASE:

The pitcher shall not throw to a base during a live ball while either foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate after the pitcher has taken the pitching position. If the throw from the pitcher's plate occurs during a live ball appeal play, the appeal is canceled. The pitcher may move back from the pitching position by stepping backwards off the pitcher's plate prior to separating her hands. Stepping forward or sideways at any time constitutes an illegal pitch.

The umpire shall give a delayed dead ball signal.

If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, the illegal pitch is nullified. All action as a result of the batted ball stands. No option is given.

When a runner passes a base, she is considered to have touched a base. Otherwise the manager has the option to take the result of the play, or the illegal pitch is enforced by awarding a ball to the batter (if ball four award first base) and advancing all runners one base.

If an illegal pitch hits the batter out of the strike zone, the batter is awarded first base and all runners are awarded one base.

Section 5

DROPPED BALL:

If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the delivery, a ball is declared on the batter, the ball will remain in play and the runner(s) may advance at their own risk.

6. BASE RUNNERS / BATTERS / MERCY:

Section 1

COURTESY RUNNERS:

The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or the catcher at any time. The same runner may not be used for both positions during the entire game. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances. The same courtesy runner may not run for both the pitcher and the catcher in the same half inning or any time during the game. Courtesy runners are allowed for pitchers and catchers only. The courtesy runner must be used as soon as the pitcher or catcher gets on base; before the next pitch is pitched to the next batter (legal or illegal). The pitcher and catcher are identified as the last players who physically played that position on defense of the first inning only, the pitcher and catcher are identified as those players listed on the lineup as pitcher and catcher.

Players who are eligible to serve as courtesy runners:

- Any available substitute.
- When no substitutes are available; the last batted out. If the last batted out is in the on-deck circle she is ineligible and therefore a courtesy runner cannot be used.

- A player may not be a substitute for any player in the half inning that she ran as a courtesy runner.
- EXCEPTION: If an injury or disqualification occurs and no substitutes are available, the courtesy runner must be used as a substitute, and take the place of the injured player. Should the courtesy runner be on base, and is entered as a substitute, the pitcher or catcher for whom the courtesy runner is running, must run in her place. Once the courtesy runner is designated for that half-inning, the pitcher or catcher for who she is running may not return to run while that courtesy runner is on base. A courtesy runner cannot run for a courtesy runner.
- EXCEPTION: Should an injury or disqualification occur to any offensive player, and no substitutes are available, the courtesy runner must take the place of the injured player. In this case, the courtesy runner enters as a substitute and the pitcher or catcher for whom the courtesy runner is running, must run in her place.
- A courtesy runner must be reported to the plate umpire. If a courtesy runner fails to report or violates the courtesy runner rule, she is considered to be an illegal runner and shall be disqualified.

Section 2

Division Specific | Mercy:

Freshman: No stealing bases. No lead offs. No dropped 3rd strike. No infield fly rule. A team can score a maximum of 7 runs above the opposing team score for that inning. Bunting is not allowed. High School mercy rule is not in effect.

Junior: No dropped 3rd strike. No limit on stolen bases including home. A team can score a maximum of 7 runs above the opposing team score for that inning. Infield fly rule is in effect. High School mercy rule is not in effect.

Senior: Dropped 3rd strike in effect. No limit on stolen bases. Infield fly rule is in effect. Mercy rule is in effect. A team can score a maximum of 7 runs above the opposing team score for that inning, except for the 7th inning. In 7th inning, run restrictions are not in play and teams may score as many runs as possible. Please note, High School rules are in effect (15 after three or 10 run lead at five innings is considered mercy).

Section 3

Sliding:

When there is a close play at a base or home plate, all runners in all softball division must slide; avoid the defensive player (runners out of base paths will be called out) or give themselves up. Runners who make intentional hard slides or any other intentional hard physical contact will be ejected from the game.

Section 4

ON-DECK BATTER:

The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.

The on-deck batter may take a position within the lines of the on-deck circle nearest the offensive team bench.

The on-deck batter may loosen up with no more than two official softball bats, an approved warm-up bat, or a combination not to exceed two. The Equipment Standards Committee following a one-year period observed by members of this committee must approve any detachable piece placed on the bat.

The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle:

- When the on-deck batter becomes the batter.
- To direct runners advancing from third to home plate.
- The on-deck batter may not interfere with the defensive players' opportunity to make an out.
- If it involves a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.
- If it is with the defensive fielder fielding a fly ball, the batter is out.

Section 5

BATTING ORDER:

The batting order of each team showing the player's first and last name, uniform number and position must be on the lineup card and must be delivered before the game by the manger or captain to the plate umpire.

The batting order delivered to the umpire must be followed throughout the game, unless a player is replaced by a substitute who must take the place of the removed player in the batting order.

(11U - Freshman only) all players present must bat. In the event a girl has to leave, she will be skipped in the lineup. If a girl shows up late, she will be added at the bottom of the lineup.

The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

EFFECT Batting out of order is an appeal play that may be made only by the defensive team. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when one legal or illegal pitch as been made to the following batter, or when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout.

If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat the correct batter must take the batter's position and legally assume any ball and strikes. Any runs scored or bases run while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal. The offensive team may correct a wrong batter at the plate with no penalty.

If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed a turn at bat and before a legal or illegal pitch has been made to the following batter or before the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area: The player who should have batted is out

Any advance or score made as a result of the improper batter becoming a batter- runner shall be nullified. Any out that is made prior to discovering this infraction, remains out.

The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the next player was the one called out, go to the next person in the line-up.

If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the player been put out by ordinary play.

If the error is discovered after the first legal or illegal pitch to the next batter, or after the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal and the next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

No runner shall be removed from the base occupied except the batter-runner who has been taken off the base by the umpire to bat in the proper place. The correct batter merely misses the turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following the correct batter in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed her turn at bat, the is player shall be the first batter in the next inning and the ball and strike count shall be canceled.

Section 6

BATTING POSITION:

The batter can leave the box:

- If the ball is hit fair or foul.
- On the swing, slap or check swing.
- If forced out of the box by a pitch.
- On a wild pitch or passed ball.
- If there is an attempted play.
- If time out has been called.
- If the pitcher leaves the eight-foot circle or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.
- On a three ball pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

EFFECT: If the batter leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of these exceptions apply, the umpire may warn the batter or call a strike. Any number of warnings and called strikes can be made with each batter. No pitch has to be thrown and the ball is dead.

The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher to the other batter's box while the pitcher is taking the signal or anytime thereafter prior to the release of the pitch, unless "time" has been granted by the umpire.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out and the runners may not advance.

Section 7

THE BATTER IS OUT:

When the third strike is swung at and the pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person.

When a batter enters the batter's box with or is discovered using an altered bat. The batter is also disqualified from the game.

When the batter enters the batter's box with or is discovered using an illegal bat.

EFFECT: If a previous batter has used the same altered or illegal bat, and a pitch has been thrown, the batter is out.

When an entire foot is touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box when the ball makes contact with the bat, and remains in fair territory (fair or foul).

When any part of a foot is touching home plate when the ball makes contact with the bat.

When a batter leaves the box to gain a running start, but has returned to the box when she makes contact with the ball.

EXCEPTION: Section 6 D-F. If no contact is made with the pitched ball, there is no penalty. When the batter bunts foul after the second strike. If the ball is caught in the air, it remains live and in play.

EXCEPTION: (11U only) bunting is not allowed.

When members of the team at bat other than runners interfere with a player attempting to field a fair or foul fly ball. When the batter hits a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.

EXCEPTION: If the batter is standing in the batter's box and contact is made while the bat is in the batter's hands, a foul ball is ruled even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and, in the umpires judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball is live and in play.

EFFECT Section 6 A-I: The ball is dead and each runner must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch when a called or swinging third strike is caught by the catcher.

When the batter has three strikes if there are fewer than two outs and first base is occupied at the time of the pitch.

The batter shall not:

- Hinder the catcher from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box.
- Intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter's box.
- Intentionally interfere with a thrown ball, in or out of the batter's box.
- Interfere with a play at home plate.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out and each runner must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference.

EXCEPTION: If no play is being made and the batter accidentally interferes with the catcher's return throw to the pitcher and a runner(s) advances safely, the umpire should call time and return the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.

PROTESTS:

Section 1

No protest will be accepted concerning a judgment call by the Umpire. All game protests regarding rule interpretation must be reported to the Umpire at the time of the play and entered into the score sheet detailing all factors pertinent to the call (outs, runner positions, batter, ball / strike count, etc). A formal written protest must be turned into the league Vice President with 48 hours. A protest fee of \$25 must accompany the protest and will be returned if the protest is upheld. All decisions by the ROSL protest board are final. Playoff games must be decided at the field at the time of the protest.