



SUTHERLAND SHIRE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION Inc.

SlowPitch Rules

2017/18 Season

These rules are current as of the above date and supersede any existing Slow Pitch Rules

General

These rules are to be read in conjunction with the Official Rules of Softball as issued by the Australian Softball Federation and adopted by the Softball NSW Association Inc. as well as the general SSSA Competition Rules as published separately.

If not specifically covered in these rules the Official Rules of Softball shall be applied, except where modified and altered by SSSA Competition Rules.

The normal rules of Fast Pitch apply in Slow Pitch **except** as specified in these rules.

Note: Wherever 'he' or 'him' or their related pronouns may appear in these rules either as words or as parts of words, they have been used for literary purposes and are meant in their generic sense (i.e., to include all humankind, or both male and female sexes).

Definitions:

- 1.1 **Bunting** – Using the bat to just block the ball without following through is not permitted.
- **Penalty:** Batter is automatically out and if there are any base runners they are not permitted to advance.
- 1.2 Charged Conferences:
- Defensive – When the fielding team requests a suspension of play (Time) so that a member from the bench can speak to the pitcher. Only one defensive conference is permitted in any half inning.
 - Offensive – When the batting team requests a suspension of play (Time) to speak to the batter or base runner. Only one offensive conference is permitted in any half inning.
 - Effect: The Umpire shall not allow Offensive or Defensive conferences in excess of the above.
- 1.3 **Chopped Ball** – A ball at which the batter strikes downward with a chopping action of the bat so that the ball bounces high into the air. This is not permitted.
- **Penalty:** batter is automatically out and if there are any base runners they are not permitted to advance.
- 1.4 **Commitment Lines** – These are marked (or understood to be marked) perpendicular to the baseline, half way between first and second, second and third base and third base and home plate. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner may not re-cross it, but must continue to the next base or home plate.
- **Penalty:** the ball is dead and the base runner is out.
- 1.5 **Inning** – An inning is completed when either three (3) outs have been achieved or six (6) runs have been scored.
- 1.6 **Final Inning** – The last innings will be any full inning that is started within the last 20 minutes of the game or the seventh innings, whichever occurs first
- 1.7 **Re-entry of Starting Players** – This rule does not apply in Slow Pitch. There is unlimited interchange.
- 1.8 **Sliding** – Sliding is NOT permitted in Slow Pitch.
- **Penalty:** The ball is dead and the Runner is out.
- 1.9 **Stealing Bases** – A base runner is not permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted.
- **Penalty:** the ball is dead, no pitch is called out by the umpire and the base runner is out.

- 1.10 **Strike Zone Mat** – The mat is twenty inches wide and forty and half inches long, and includes the home plate marked on the mat. A strike is called by the umpire when a legally pitched ball hits any part of this mat.
- 1.11 **Tagging** – Tagging is NOT allowed in Slow Pitch. If a runner is tagged by a fielder in possession of the ball (by whichever hand holds the ball) the runner is safe.
- 1.12 **Safety Lines** – Each base has a line marked (or understood to be marked) extending from its front (leading) edge towards outfield that, if the runner passes, is the same as touching the base during play. (Front edge refers to the edge to which the runner is heading at the time of the play). The runner need to touch the base and is not considered to have attempted to advance until passing the leading edge of the base on the way to the next base. The runner should return to the base and be touching the base at the time of the next pitch
- 1.13 **Home Safety Line** – Home plate has a line extended from its front corner (closest to third base) and extends at 90 degrees from the third base foul line to the dead ball line. This acts as the safety line for home.

Equipment

- 1.14 A Twelve inch 'Incrediball' will be used.
- 1.15 Only official softball bats may be used. No baseball bats are permitted Penalty: batter is automatically out.
- 1.16 Shoes must be worn by all players. Metal cleats and shoes with screw in studs are not permitted.
- 1.17 Gloves must be used by players.
- 1.18 All players on a team shall wear playing tops alike in colour and trim. The pants, shorts or knickerbockers do not have to be the same.

Players & Substitutes

- 1.19 A team shall consist of up to ten (10) fielders and up to twelve (12) batters, with a maximum of five males on the field. A minimum of seven (7) players are required to start a game. (The ratio of females and males must be same within one team at all times)
- **Exception:** Wrap Around Rule; Refer section 6.5.
- 1.20 There shall be a minimum of two females in the infield and two females in the outfield.
- **Exception:** Where there are only 3 females, they still need to be split across the Infield and Outfield. Ie not all three on the infield or all three in the outfield.
- 1.21 The designated player is not used in Slow Pitch.
- 1.22 An Extra Player (EP) will not be used in Slow Pitch.
- 1.23 Substitutions are permitted without restrictions. The re-entry rule does not apply in

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Slow Pitch.

1.24 When a substitute enters the game they must play at least one complete innings, for example, one turn at batting and one turn at fielding.

The Game

1.25 An inning ends when three (3) offensive players are declared out or six (6) runs have been scored, whichever occurs first. The six run rule does not apply in the Last Innings.

1.26 A regulation game is seven innings or ninety minutes, whichever occurs first. No innings shall start within six minutes of the scheduled finishing time, but an innings in progress will continue until completed to a result.

1.27 No run may score after the sixth run has been scored in an inning. Except for the Last Inning when the six run rule is not in play.

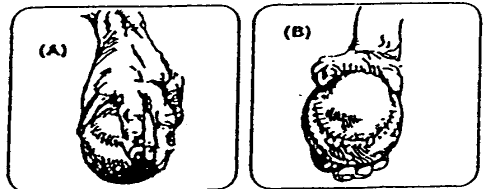
Pitching

1.28 The pitcher must have at least one foot (but two are permitted) in contact with the pitcher's plate.

1.29 The pitcher is not required to take a step when delivering the pitch. If a step is taken, it can be forward, backward or sideways.

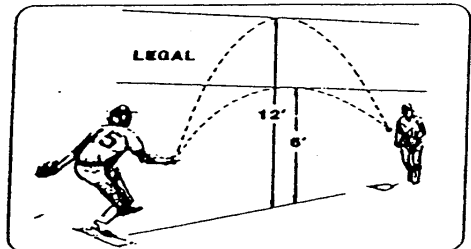
1.30 The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

1.31 The ball must be delivered in an underarm motion and released at a moderate speed. The hand must be below the hip. The pitcher can release the ball with his palm on top (A) or under (B) the ball.



1.32 The ball must be pitched on an arc and during its arc must travel at least six feet (1.82m), but no higher than twelve feet (3.64m), above the ground.

1.33 The pitcher must release the ball on the first forward swing of the arm past the hip.



1.34 The catcher must remain in the catcher's box until the pitched ball is hit or reaches the strike zone mat.

1.35 If any of the above conditions are not met the Umpire will signal an **Illegal Pitch**.

- If the batter chooses to hit or swing at the ball then play will continue and the ball will remain alive, the batter and all base runners are at risk of being put out as if the pitch was not illegal.
- If the batter does not swing and the ball hits the mat, the Umpire shall call a ball

1.36 The ball is dead after each pitch unless the pitch is hit.

1.37 No pitch is called:

- If the ball slips from the pitcher's hands during the wind up or backswing
- If the runner leaves the base before the pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate.

Batting

1.38 A strike is called:

- For each legally pitched ball that hits any part of the strike zone mat
- For each pitched ball (legal or illegal) swung at and missed
- For each foul ball
- The ball is dead on all strikes.

1.39 A ball is called:

- For each pitched ball not swung at that does not hit the strike zone mat.
- For each pitched ball not swung at that is not the correct height.
- For each pitched ball that hits the batter when not striking at the pitch.
- When the pitcher fails to pitch the ball within the ten second period.
- A ball is dead when a ball is called.

1.40 The batter is out:

- When the ball is bunted or chopped downward.
- When the third strike is struck at and missed. (Whether the catcher catches it on the full or not.)
- When the batted ball is foul on the third strike, whether the ball is caught or not. Base runners may not advance.

1.41 A batter hit by a pitched ball is not awarded first base.

1.42 **Wrap Around Rule:** Males batting must be separated by a female batter, unless there is an odd number of players therefore the first and last batter may be male.

- **Note:** If a female separating two males leaves the game early, one of the males must not bat to maintain this rule.

Base Running

- 1.43 Base runners must remain in contact with the base until the pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate.
- **Penalty:** the ball is dead; no pitch is called and the runner is out.
- 1.44 Normal Fly Ball and Tag Up rules apply.
- 1.45 The Infield Fly Rule is applied in Slow-Pitch. On an Infield Fly Call the batter will be out as determined by the Umpire.
- 1.46 The batter is permitted to overrun any base provided they do not attempt to run further bases and they return immediately to the base they will be called safe.
- **NOTE:** Simply turning to the left and returning to the base is not making a physical attempt to run to the next base.

Protests

- 1.47 There shall be no protests in Slow Pitch.