



2026 USA SOFTBALL Rules with the following exceptions

ROSTERS

The roster size can be unlimited for the number of players on the team. A team can add to the roster all the way up to Check In. **A player's age as of September 1 determines the age in which the player is eligible to play the following year.** Copies of Birth Certifications should be readily available throughout the duration of the tournament. Rosters will freeze after Check In. Check-In one hour prior to teams' 1st game at courtyard, NO EXCEPTIONS.

TIME LIMIT/DETERMINING HOME & AWAY

Please be ready to play, all games can start up to 30 minutes prior to scheduled time. 10 & 12u 6 inning games, 14u & up 7 inning games or time limit. Pool Play & Playoffs > 1:20 finish Inning. The clock starts immediately after the Home Plate Meeting. A new inning starts after last recorded out. A coin flip will determine the home and away teams during Pool play. The higher seed during Bracket Play will be the home team. Champions Tie Breaker will be used during Playoffs to settle a tie. Championship Games will be full games.

CHAMPIONS TIE BREAKER

If a game is tied after all innings or the time limit reached during playoffs the "Tie Breaker" will go into effect. You start the next inning with the last 3 batted outs at their respective bases, one out and play the complete inning. This format will continue until a winner is determined. Pool Play games can end in a tie. Winning Percentage determines team seeding.

INTENTIONAL WALKS

12U - 18U Inform the umpire of your desire to walk the batter. No pitches have to be thrown.

MERCY RULE - ENFORCED IN ALL ROUNDS

Mercy Rules are 12 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 8 runs after 5 innings.

STARTING LINE UP

Nine defensive players will bat or teams have the following options: 1. Bat nine players without the DP/Flex. 2. Bat nine Players and use the DP/Flex. 3. Bat up to and including all roster players without a DP/Flex. 4. Bat up to and including all roster players with the DP/Flex. Any 9 players can be in the field, but the batting order cannot change.

SHORTHANDED RULE

Teams cannot start a game with less than 9 players. If an injury occurs, that player is removed from the order without penalty. If an injury takes you to 8 players, then the spot in the order where the injured player is removed is now an out. If the player is ejected from the game and the result is less than 9 players, the game is a forfeit and a 7-0 score is recorded for the winning team. You cannot play with less than 7 players.

RE-ENTRY RULE

Starters may be replaced by a legal sub and re-enter at any time during the game as long as they re-enter into the same slot in the original batting line up. Subs leaving the game may not return to play.

COURTESY RUNNER / TIME BETWEEN INNINGS

1 MINUTE BETWEEN INNINGS. Courtesy runners are optional for both the pitcher and catcher at any time. The closest player to the pitcher/catcher in the order should be the runner if there are not subs available. The rule is meant to speed up the game. Please have the runners ready to go.

BAT REQUIREMENTS

Players may use up to 2 1/4" size bats. USA Softball has had a formal 1.20 BPF standard for fastpitch bats. UIC/Umpires have final say on Bats declared illegal.

DESIGNATED PLAYER (DP)

The Primary Role of the DP is to play offense (bats/runs) for the FLEX. The DP may play defense at any position.

FLEX

The Primary Role of the FLEX is to play defense only which can be at any defensive position. The FLEX player is placed in the FLEX position, a non-batting position listed last in the lineup. The FLEX may remain in the FLEX position for the entire game or may assume the DP's position in the batting order and play offense (bat/run).

INFIELD FLY

There is no infield fly in 10u. All others have the rule.

TIE BREAKER RULES

1. Overall record (winning percentage).
2. Head to Head. (Unless 3 or more teams are tied in the overall standings)
3. Total runs allowed in regulation games.
4. Total runs scored in regulation games.
5. Coin flip

BEHAVIOR

Any arguing of the judgment of balls and strikes will result in a team warning. Any repeat offenses will result in the ejection of the team member. **THERE ARE NO METAL SPIKES ALLOWED ON THE TURF.**

NOT COVERED IN THIS PACKET

> Refer to USA Softball Rules located online at the APP STORE or PLAYSTORE

Any item is not covered in the rules, the tournament committee UIC's & Tournament Director will make the fairest possible ruling and that ruling will be final. Champions Events reserves the right to amend tournament rules at any time for specific tournament play.

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