

GENERAL SOFTBALL RULES – MMAA 2015

These are general softball rules. They have not been tailored to each MMAA division in this document. The Division rules should be referred to see which of these rules apply to specific divisions.

1. On start of play, the plate umpire calls "Batter up" for the batter to take up position in the batter's box. On any suspension of play the umpire calls "Time out". To restart the game the umpire calls "Play ball".
2. A *STRIKE* is called by the umpire for each
 - a. Legally pitched ball entering the *strike zone* (*see diagram*) and at which the batter does not swing.
 - b. Legally pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.
 - c. Foul tip held by the catcher.
 - d. Foul ball not caught when the batter has less than two strikes.
3. A *BALL* is called by the umpire for each:
 - a. Legally pitched ball that does not enter the strike zone, or touches the ground before reaching the home-plate and which the batter does not attempt to strike.
 - b. Illegally pitched ball.
4. If a pitched or batted ball hits the batter whilst in the batter's box, the ball is *DEAD*.
5. Batters complete their turn at the bat as soon as they hit a fair ball, when the umpire has called three strikes or when the umpire has called four balls. Four balls entitle the batter to go to first base. This is known as a **WALK**. If the base-runners are in a force situation, each base-runner will advance one base.
6. If the pitch hits the batter it is a dead ball with the possible results:
 - Not in zone. Tried to move or froze. Award first base.
 - Not in zone. No attempt to move. Moved into the path of the ball or in such a way as to increase the likelihood of being hit. Keep the batter at bat and award a ball.
 - In the zone. Call a strike. If strike three, the batter is out.
 - Batter is swinging at the pitch and it hits her, not the bat. Call a strike. If strike three, the batter is out.
 - Batter is out of the box and is hit by the pitch before the pitch reaches the plate. Call a No Pitch.
7. The batter is out if the third strike is caught.
8. Batters should run to first base immediately after hitting a fair ball. While running there, the bat should be dropped *safely* into foul territory.
9. If the batted ball hits the batter outside the batter's box, the batter is out and the ball is dead.

BASE-RUNNING

10. Base-runners may attempt to advance to the next base when the ball is hit into fair territory and not caught, when a ball is overthrown, on a strike, on a ball, when the catcher misses the ball, or when the coach tells you to.
11. The batter/base-runner may over-run first base. When over-running first base, always turn into foul territory to avoid being tagged off base.
12. Base-runners must retain contact with the base. Players may be put out if tagged off base.
13. Base-runners must return to the base they occupied if a hit ball is caught, provided they left the base *before* the ball was handled. However, the base-runner may advance to the next base after the ball is handled or attempt to advance after retouching the base.
14. Base-runners may not advance on a foul ball or when the ball becomes dead.
15. Base-runners attempting to *steal* may return to their original base, even if they have travelled over halfway to the next base.
16. Base-runners may not be more than one metre from any baseline when trying to avoid a tag-out.
17. Base runners must touch each base.
18. One run is scored when a base-runner completes a full circuit of the bases in legal order before the third out of an inning.
19. A base-runner may legally leave the base when a pitched ball crosses the plate. Base-runners must maintain contact with the base until the ball crosses the plate. If the runner leaves the base early, the runner is out.
20. A base-runner is out if a fielder holding the ball touches the base to which the runner is forced before the runner does.
 - a. A *force-out* is made by tagging a base ahead of a runner only when the runner is forced to advance because the batter becomes a runner.
21. A base-runner is out if a fielder tags (i.e. touches) the base-runner with the ball whilst off the base. (First base must tag inside the fair territory area.)
22. Two runners may not occupy the same base. The first runner retains the right to the base, except on a forced play.
23. If a runner misses a base, the runner may be put out by a fielder touching the base with the ball before the runner re-tags the base.
24. A base-runner must return to base on a foul ball, and when a batted ball is caught by a fielder. On a batted ball, after retouching the base, the base-runner may advance at their own risk.

25. The base-runner must always be alert, watching the coach and/or looking for opportunities to steal.
26. There may be times when the ball and the base-runner arrive at the base almost together. Sliding may be the answer to get the runner onto the base safely. However, the runner must not slide into first base (runner is out). The runner is out if the runner overslides home plate, misses it, and the plate is tagged by a fielder before the runner can return.

BATTING

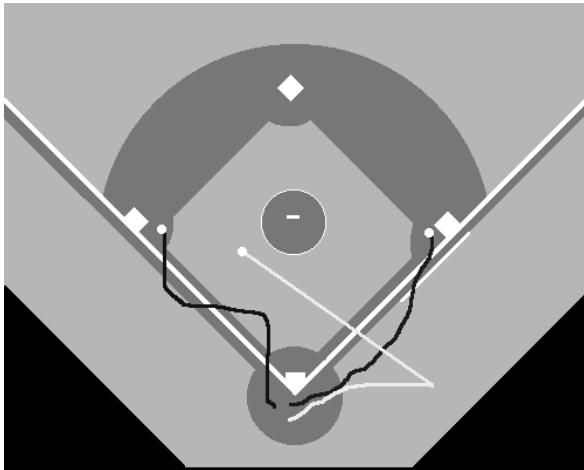
27. The batter must stand with both feet within the batter's box.
28. The batter is out if an attempt to hit the ball is made while the whole of either foot is outside the lines of the batter's box.
29. A batter *must* run when a fair ball is hit.
30. The batter is out if a fair fly ball is caught by an opponent before it touches the ground.
31. The batter is out if a foul fly ball is caught by an opponent before it touches the ground.
32. A batter may run after three strikes if the catcher fails to catch the ball. (Only in Peewee and Bantam if there is less than 2 out and no one on first base) The batter is out if the third strike is caught and held by the catcher.
33. If the third out is called before a batter has completed the turn at bat, this batter becomes the first batter in the next inning.

KEY DEFINITIONS

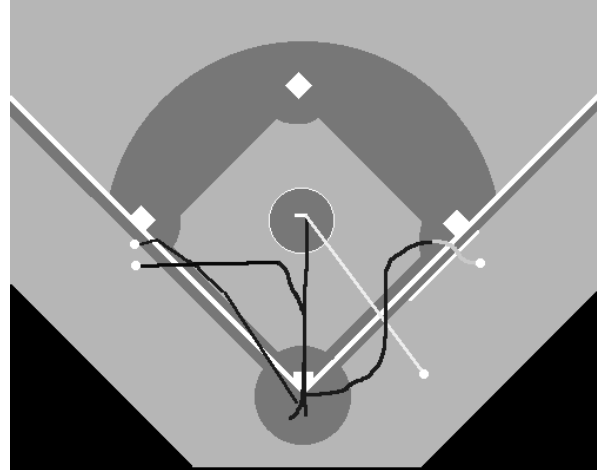
1. **Fair Ball** - Is a batted ball that:
 - a. settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or
 - b. is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or
 - c. touches first, second or third base, or
 - d. first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or
 - e. while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or
 - f. that while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight.
2. **Foul Ball** - Is a batted ball that
 - a. settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or
 - b. bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or
 - c. first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or
 - d. while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
3. **Foul Tip** - A foul tip is a batted ball that does not rise higher than the batter's head, and which is *caught* by the catcher. A strike is called, the ball remains in play, and base-runners may advance at their own risk. If this is the third strike the batter is out.

UNTOUCHED BATTED BALLS:

FAIR BALLS

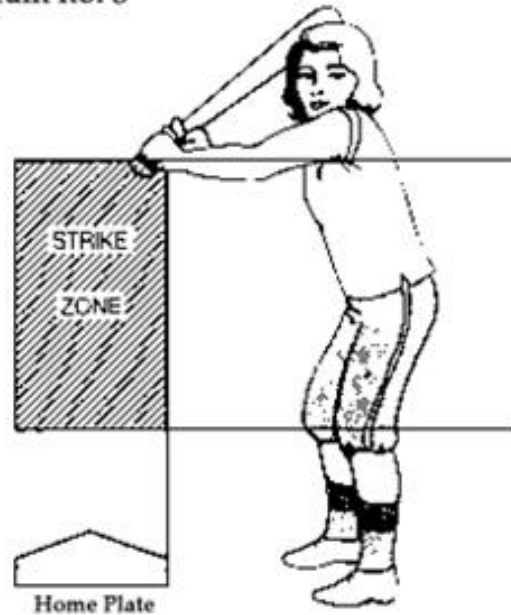


FOUL BALLS



4. Illegally Caught Ball - This occurs when a fielder catches a batted ball with a cap, glove, or any part of the playing uniform *while is it detached from its proper place*.
5. Infield Fly Rule - The batter is out if an infield fly ball is hit and there are less than two runners out and runners are on first and second, or first, second and third. The umpire calls "infield fly, batter out".
6. Interference - This is the act of an offensive player or team member which impedes, hinders, of confuses a defensive player who is attempting to execute a play.
7. Obstruction - This occurs:
 - a. When a defensive player or team member hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
 - i. Batter gets base and other base-runners advance if forced
 - b. A fielder who does not have possession of the ball, or who is in the act of fielding a batted ball, impedes the progress of a base-runner who is legally running bases.
 - i. Additional base may be granted
8. Tagging - A tag (or legal touch) occurs when a base-runner, who is not touching base, is touched by the ball whilst held in the fielder's hand. A runner may be tagged between bases by any fielder. A runner *must* be tagged by a fielder on an unforced run.
9. Strike Zone - The strike zone is that space over the home-plate, which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.

Diagram no. 3



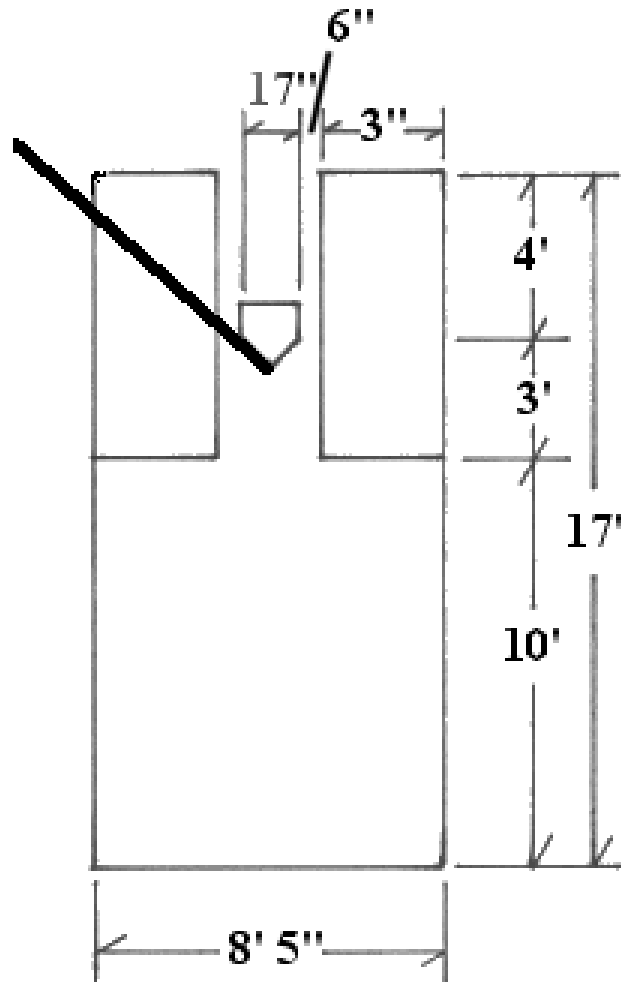
10. Dead Ball Situations

- a. Ball leaves playing area
 - i. Runner advances to base they were running to plus an additional base
- b. Hitting the pitch while out of the box or on the plate
 - i. It is a dead ball and an out. The bat must have contacted the ball, and it does not matter whether the ball goes fair or foul because it is dead at the moment of contact.
 - ii. For the dead ball and an out, the batter's foot must be touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or some part of the foot must be touching the plate even if part of that foot is still on the line of the batter's box.
- c. Hit with batted ball
 - i. It is a dead ball, and the result is either a foul ball or the batter is out.
 - ii. If the batter is in the batter's box (no foot touching the ground completely outside the lines) when hit with her own batted ball, it is a foul ball.
 - iii. If the batter is out of the batter's box when hit with their own batted ball, the batter is out for interference.
- d. Hitting a ball twice while bat is still in batter's hands
 - i. If the bat is in the batter's hands and the batter is not out of the batter's box when she hits the ball a second time, whether the ball is over fair or foul territory; it is a foul ball.
 - ii. If the bat is in the batter's hands and the batter is out of the batter's box when she hits the ball a second time, and the ball is over fair territory; the batter is out.
 - iii. If the bat is in the batter's hands and the batter is out of the batter's box when she hits the ball a second time, and the ball is over foul territory: it is a foul ball, unless it is judged intentional, in which case the batter is out.

11. Checked Swings

- a. If breaks wrist it is a strike

BATTERS' BOX



REVIEW QUIZ

1. On a third strike the batter swings and it is a foul tip that the catcher catches.
 - a. The batter is out.
 - b. It is called a foul ball and the batter stays at bat.
2. A batter swings at a pitch. The ball hits the batter's arm near the shoulder
 - a. It is a dead ball and the batter advances to first base
 - b. It is a dead ball and a No-pitch
 - c. It is a dead ball and a strike is called
3. The batter hits a grounder down the first base line. The ball touches the batter's leg as he runs to first base.
 - a. The play is dead and the batter gets to hit again
 - b. The batter is allowed to advance to first base unless tagged or forced out.
 - c. The batter is out and the ball is dead.
4. The strike zone:
 - a. Is between the shoulders and the knees
 - b. Is between the armpits and the knees while standing in a natural pitching stance
 - c. Is between the armpits and the knees while standing in any position (crouched etc)
5. While attempting to get the force-out at second base, a fielder throws the ball that hits the runner in the back.
 - a. The runner is out
 - b. The runner is safe
6. With a runner on second base (no one on first or third), the batter hits the ball. To get the runner out at third base:
 - a. The bag must be stepped on with the ball
 - b. The runner must be tagged out
 - c. Either of the above
7. A hit ball hits the orange part of first base.
 - a. It is a fair ball
 - b. It is a foul ball
 - c. It is a dead ball and the batter hits again
8. A fielder catches a fly ball between his stomach and his arms.
 - a. The batter is out
 - b. The batter is not out and runners can advance
9. The batter's bat hits the catcher's glove while attempting to hit the ball. He misses the ball.
 - a. A strike is called
 - b. Obstruction is called – the batter gets first base
 - c. It is a dead ball and a No-pitch is called
10. A ball is hit and lands in the outfield in fair territory near the first base foul line and then bounces into foul territory
 - a. It is a foul ball
 - b. It is a fair ball

11. The batter slides into first base:
 - a. The batter is out
 - b. The batter is safe
12. There is a force out at third base and the runner gets there at the same time that the third baseman catches the ball with her foot on third base:
 - a. The runner is out
 - b. The runner is safe
13. A base-runner runs 4 feet off of the base line to avoid being tagged out:
 - a. The runner is out
 - b. The runner is safe
14. A fielder tags a base-runner with his glove while the ball is in his other hand
 - a. The runner is out
 - b. The runner is safe
15. The hitter steps on the plate to reach for and hit the outside pitch. He hits the ball into fair territory and advances to third base:
 - a. Batter is safe and play resumes
 - b. It is a dead ball and batter must hit again
 - c. It is a dead ball and the batter is out
16. The batter's box is:
 - a. 4 ft x 6 ft
 - b. 3 ft x 7 ft
 - c. 4 ft x 8 ft
 - d. 3 ft x 8 ft
17. In Atom, when the catcher drops the third strike
 - a. The batter is out
 - b. The batter can attempt to run to first base
18. After hitting the ball the batter runs past first base and turns towards second base. The first baseman receives the ball and tags the batter-runner:
 - a. The batter-runner is out
 - b. The batter-runner is safe
19. After the pitcher is holding the ball in the pitcher's circle, a base runner advances from first to second base:
 - a. It is a valid stolen base
 - b. The runner must return to first base
 - c. The runner is out.
20. Two runners are standing on the same base. A fielder tags both of them.
 - a. The first runner on the base is out
 - b. The second runner on the base is out
 - c. They are both out.