

DIVISION 5 UMPIRES QUICK REFERENCE RULES GUIDE (5.1.24)

EJECTIONS:

1. A player who has been ejected or suspended may remain at the softball complex but may not sit in the dugout until suspension has ended. A player's suspension will begin after the incident has been reviewed by the Recreation and Parks Department.
2. Any player engaged in hassling, verbal abuse, any threat, or act of physical aggression towards a scorekeeper, umpire, manager, or another *player shall be reported to the Villages Recreation Department for disciplinary action.*

GAMES:

1. Both teams must be ready to play when the umpire signals to "play ball". The umpire may then start a ten count to call balls or strikes if one team is not prepared to begin or continue.
2. Teams are limited to five (5) runs per inning, except a team that is behind by more than five (5) runs may score enough runs to catch up. The only exception to the five (5) run rule is an over the fence home run which scores the fifth (5) run will be scored as the sixth (6) run of the inning.
3. In the seventh (7) and subsequent innings, scoring is limited to catch up plus five (5) runs.
4. Tie Breaker Rule-When the score is tied after seven (7) innings, teams will start the 8th and 9th inning with a runner on second base. The base runner is the last player to bat from the previous inning who did not require a courtesy runner.
5. Mercy Rule. If a team is leading by 12 or more runs after the 5th inning (4 and a half innings if the home team is ahead) the game will be considered complete. If the visiting team is ahead by 12 or more runs after the 5th inning, the home team must bat in the bottom of the inning.

Emergency Wind or Sun Affects:

1. In case the sun or wind is affecting the accuracy of the pitchers, the umpire may lower the height of a legal pitch.
2. The umpire(s) are empowered to stop or delay a Game at any time because of rain, fog, lightning in the area (20 minute wait period), darkness or any other cause which puts the umpires, players or the spectators in peril. The umpires may stop a game for a 5-minute heat break when they determine it is necessary.

Note: The Commissioner, DIC or the Villages Recreation staff are the only authorities to cancel play.

Pre-Game Warm Up: The home team will take infield practice first. The home team pitcher will be granted five (5) warm-up pitches. After which the umpire will call for a batter and the game will begin. **When the visiting team takes the field for the first time, they will be permitted infield practice and the visiting pitcher will be granted ten (10) warm-up pitches.** Further infield or pitching practice is prohibited unless there is a pitching change, **and the new pitcher will be granted ten (10) warm-up pitches.**

THE PITCH / PITCHER:

1. The pitcher must deliver the ball toward home plate within **10 seconds** from the time the pitcher has the ball, and the batter has taken position in the batter's box. Once the pitching motion has started the umpire should not call time unless player safety is involved. If the pitcher does not start the delivery motion after ten seconds, the umpire will call a ball. If the pitcher delivers the ball as the umpire yells "ball", and then the batter hits the pitch, the ball is live. Additionally, the same applies if the umpire calls the pitch flat or illegal and the batter hits the ball, the ball is live and in play.
2. If a team's designated pitcher is in the lineup either he or another roster player on that team must pitch. If your designated pitcher is injured a pitcher will be assigned as a substitute from players signed up to sub pitch or another of a team's roster players that are in the lineup may pitch.

A. A pitcher may use a pitching screen. The pitching screen may be placed no more than 3 feet toward the home plate mat and must cover at least half the pitcher's plate. The screen must be placed to the left of a right-handed pitcher and to the right of a left-handed pitcher feet toward the home plate mat and must cover at least half the pitcher's plate. The screen must be placed to the left of a right-handed pitcher and to the right of a left-handed pitcher. If a pitching screen is used the pitcher **MUST** step behind the screen after every pitch. The umpire will warn the pitcher for the first instance, and thereafter an illegal pitch will be called for subsequent violations.

B. If a pitching screen is used, any ball hit off the screen is a dead ball and counts as a strike.

and with the third such occurrence of the at bat, the batter will be called out.

The pitcher may field a batted ball once a complete step behind the screen is performed.

NOTE: A thrown ball by a defensive player that hits the screen is a **LIVE ball**.

C. If a team's designated pitcher is in the lineup either he or another roster player on that team must pitch. If your designated pitcher is injured a pitcher will be assigned as a substitute from players signed up to sub pitch or another of a team's roster players that are in the lineup may pitch.

THE BATTER

1. Should the batter hit a pitched ball and either foot is entirely off the green mat and in the dirt, the ball will be declared a dead ball, and the batter will be called out. Should a batter swing at a pitched ball and any portion of one or both feet contact the strike mat, the batter will be called out and the ball is a dead ball.
2. Batting out of order is an appeal play that can only be made by the defensive team. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal when one pitch has been made to the following batter.

3. If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take his place and assume any balls and strikes. **NOTE: The offensive team may correct a wrong batter at the plate with no penalty.**

15. Double Bag/Safety Base

The safety double bag shall be used at first base. Batter-runner must use the safety base if there is a play being made at the base unless avoiding a collision with the defender. To avoid a collision, the batter-runner can use either bag. Defender must touch the white bag to record an out on the initial play unless making the play from foul ground. After the initial play, the double base/safety base becomes one base.

This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base. This does not include returning to base after over running, or running on a ball hit to the outfield, or re-tag to advance on a caught fly ball when either bag may be used by the runner and fielder.

A batter/runner who safely reaches first base must return to first base in foul territory. A batter/runner who steps into fair territory when returning to first base is in jeopardy of being put out by either being tagged or a fielder touching first base while in possession of the ball.

Courtesy Runners

17. a) Players who need a courtesy runner must be identified when the line-up is submitted and designated with an "R". Players requiring a courtesy runner must inform the plate umpire of this need. The player requiring a courtesy runner may proceed to any base they can safely reach and then must get their courtesy runner. They may turn left after reaching first base without penalty if they stay in foul territory. A batter-runner who turns left and steps into fair territory is in jeopardy of being put out. The courtesy runner for the player designated needing one must be on base before the first pitch to the next batter. A player who requires a courtesy runner as indicated with an "R" in the lineup must continue to use a courtesy runner for the rest of the game.

b) A runner, if he agrees, may be replaced at any time, at any base with a courtesy runner. NOTE: Any player who starts at second base in an extra inning game CANNOT get a courtesy runner.

c) **A pitcher** who takes a courtesy runner to allow them to put their equipment on, or a player who needs a runner for any reason, (injury, equipment failure, out of breath, etc.) is not required to use a courtesy runner their next at bat. Only players indicated by an "R" on the lineup are required to use a runner every time.

d) The first base coach shall be the runner for the batter requiring a courtesy runner. The batter then becomes the first base coach until replaced by another player who can become a courtesy runner. Running across the field to become a first base coach is discouraged since it can delay the game and a ten count and called strike may occur.

e) A batter requiring a courtesy runner must reach first base safely unless the batter is walked.

f) A courtesy runner on base when it is his time to bat shall take his turn at bat and be replaced on the base by another courtesy runner without penalty - no out will be recorded.

g) A courtesy runner is in the game when they touch the base last occupied by the batter requiring a courtesy runner. This exchange will occur when the umpire calls "time-out" immediately following the batters at bat. Once a courtesy runner steps on base they are the official runner.

h) A player can only be a courtesy runner for one batter per inning. If a player has been a courtesy runner more than one batter in the inning an out will be recorded when the infraction is identified, and the ball will be declared dead with runners returning to their original bases. If a batter who requires a courtesy runner comes to bat more than one time in an inning the same courtesy runner may be used.

- i) A player who requires a courtesy runner may not be used as a courtesy runner for another player, in the same inning. If a player who requires a courtesy runner steps on the base, they must be replaced by a different courtesy runner without penalty.

APPEAL PLAYS

18. There are only three types of appeals: **A. Missing a base. B. Leaving a base early on a caught fly before the ball is first touched. C. Batting out of order.**

When only a manager, or a manager's designated representative, asks an umpire who made a call as described below to consult with his umpire partner, **as a courtesy**, the umpires will review the play in question. Following the consultation, the umpire making the original call will overturn or confirm the original call for a ball was fair/foul or that a base runner was safe or out.

Advancing Runners

19. a) When a fielder deliberately contacts a batted or thrown ball with his cap, glove or any part of his uniform or equipment, while it is detached from its proper place on the fielder's person. The umpire will declare the ball dead and all base runners are entitled to advance:

1. On a fair batted ball - advance three (3) bases from the time of the pitch.
2. On a thrown ball - advance two (2) bases from the time of the throw.

Obstruction

a) The act of obstruction occurs when:

1. A defensive player, or team member, hinders or prevents a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
2. Any action by a fielder not in possession of the ball, or not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a runner. This act may include using a fake tag to slow the progress of the runner. Defensive players not involved in a play on the runner must yield the base path to the runner or be charged by the umpire for obstruction.

3. The obstruction does not have to be intentional and may be vocal.
4. When an umpire declares an obstruction, he will determine the course of action. This action may include advancing all runners to the base they would have attained had the obstruction not occurred.

Interference

a) The act of interference occurs when:

1. An act of any offensive player or team member, umpire, or spectator, that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to make a play. Contact is not necessary and may be verbal.
2. When a batter-runner intentionally interferes with a play at home in an obvious attempt to prevent an out, both the batter-runner and the base runner are to be called out.

When a base runner, who has been called out, they must divert from the base path away from the defensive player attempting to make a throw. Should the base runner continue in the base path to prevent or hinder an attempted throw by the defensive player the base runner closest to home will also be called out. (ISA Batter – Runner is Out paragraph D)

4. When an offensive player interferes with a defensive player the ball is dead and the player is out. All runners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the interference.
5. If an offensive player interferes in an effort to prevent a double play that player is out as well as the runner closest to home. This includes a runner who has been called out who continues to the base to prevent a throw by the defensive player. (ISA Batter – Runner is Out paragraph D)

M-UMPIRES

- 1) Umpires are the representatives of the Division 5 Softball when they have been assigned to a game. As such they are authorized and required to enforce every section and all parts of the playing rules.
 - a) Any disagreement with an umpire's decision must be expressed ONLY by the team manager. Players will not engage in discussions or disputes with umpires or badger umpires in any way. If an umpire feels badgered or the offending player refuses to end the discussion, the umpire will provide a verbal warning to the player and the team manager. The Umpire is empowered to eject the offending player should the badgering or the discussion continue.
 - b) Verbal abuse or any threat or act of physical aggression toward an umpire will result in the player's immediate ejection.
 - c) Use of profanity by a player may result in ejection from the game. Use of profanity by an umpire may result in their suspension.
 - d) Umpires will remove any player smoking on the playing field or in the dugout and anyone who throws equipment in a display of anger. Umpires may order any pet to be removed from the dugouts during a game.
 - e) "The Villages Recreation Department Incident Report" must be completed for any ejection of a manager/player and/or infraction of rule and must be reported to a Board member or the Villages

Recreation Department the day of the incident. The Board of Directors will forward the report to the Recreation Department with a recommendation.

f) Ejection carries an automatic two game suspension, and the player receives this suspension after until The Villages Recreation Department completes its due diligence which could extend this suspension for an undefined period. Any player ejected from a game cannot be on the fields or in the dugout during their suspension nor participate in softball activities such as coaching, score keeping and umpiring. The player is restricted to the stands. Violation will lead to an Incident Report with further suspension.

g) Umpires are responsible for maintaining a proper demeanor and treating players with respect.

THIS IS A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE. PLEASE REFER TO PLAYING RULES ON THE DIVISION 5 WEB SITE FOR COMPLETE DEFINITION.