



## MSL ADULT SOFTBALL RULES

### Player Conduct

- Only the team captains are permitted to dispute a questionable call by the umpire.
- Players acting in an overly aggressive or malicious manner may result in suspension at the commissioner's discretion.
- Neither the League Office nor the Commissioners may be contacted for a ruling before or during a game. The umpire is entrusted with rendering all rulings on the field of play. Any disputes must be brought to the attention of the league office by the team captain following the game.
- Dugouts must be thoroughly cleaned after each game.
- No audible foul language on or around the field.
- Grounds crew must be treated with courtesy and respect.
- All players must wear the official league jersey, and heads must be covered. Playing without a cap or kippa is prohibited.

### Game Management

- Teams may bat as many players as they wish. Regardless of how many batters a team has, there is a maximum of 10 fielders.
- League policy is that players must be a minimum of 17 years of age. Any players below 17 require approval by the Commissioners.
- Games will begin at the announced time, assuming each team can field a minimum of seven eligible players. Any team that cannot field a minimum of seven players by 10 minutes after the official start of game time forfeits.
- All regular season games are scheduled for nine innings of play and must be completed within the scheduled time frame. During the last five minutes of play, no new inning may commence. However, the umpire has final discretion regarding the time a game is concluded.
- A mercy rule will be in effect during the regular season when a team is leading by 15 runs after five innings of play. Upon the completion of the 15th leading run crossing the plate, the umpire will bring the game to an immediate close if the leading team is the "Home" team. If the leading team is the "Visiting" team, the captain of the "Home" team reserves the right to either end the game at this time or to have "last licks".

### Batting

- Any player arriving before the batting order has been cycled through may enter the game and be added to the roster at any spot in the order corresponding to where it is when they arrive up to the last spot in the order. A player may also be subbed in. After the batting order has



been completed, late arriving players may be subbed in only. The player that is replaced must leave the game and may not return.

- A player's spot in the lineup may not be skipped – doing so will result in an automatic out. **Only if** 1) a player is injured midgame and cannot continue, or 2) it is clearly communicated to the opposing captain *before the game* which player will need to leave early AND exactly what time he will need to leave, the player will be completely removed from the game (batting and fielding) with no automatic out. Of course, as mentioned above, a player may be permanently subbed for at any time.
- Baseball (hardball) bats are forbidden.
- Bunts and intentional check swings are not allowed. A batter who does so in the opinion of the ump will be called out, and all runners returned to their previous bases (it is a dead ball).

### Slotting

- Two players may be “slotted” into one spot. In essence, they are the same player, and may freely be substituted for each other (whether at bat, in the field or on the bases). As such, they may not occupy the field at the same time, nor may they enter the game as a substitute for any other player. The slotted players must be designated before the game.

### Fielding

- Captains will determine the best substitution system for their team.
- A fielder may NEVER block the base.
- Fake tags are not permitted

### Pitching

- The pitcher's mound is 46 feet from the back of home plate.
- Pitchers must begin with one foot on the rubber.
- Pitchers may spin the ball.
- Pitchers must deliver the ball in an underhand motion.
- Windmill, slingshot (coming back or forward on the side), sidearm and complete revolution deliveries are not allowed.
- There is no “palm up” rule.
- Pickoffs by the pitcher are not permitted

### Baserunning

- Players may not wear metal cleats
- When running to first on a batted ball, players **must** step on the orange (safety base).



- Base runners may not lead.
- Base runners may run ON THE RELEASE.
- Base runners may not intentionally collide with a fielder. Doing so will result in ejection from the game. A base runner MUST SLIDE OR AVOID if a play is being made.
- Tagging up from any base is permitted.
- Teams may use pinch runners for a maximum of two players, who must be clearly identified to the opposing team. The pinch runner will be the last batted out. (If a player is injured during the course of the game and requires a pinch runner, the captain may designate a pinch runner for this player in lieu of a player originally selected. The original player must run for themselves.)
  - The pinch runner will be the “last batted out” *at the time the substitution is made*, not necessarily the one at the time of the at bat. (If a team wants to replace a pinch runner with another pinch runner, that will count as their second pinch runner for the game.)
- Players occupying the same slot (see above) may be freely substituted for each other, and do not count towards a team’s two pinch runner maximum.
- The infield fly rule is in effect and will be called at the umpire’s discretion.
- Catchers may attempt to pick off baserunners at first or third base. The runner will be called out if a fielder with the ball steps on the base before he gets back – no tag is required. If a pickoff attempt is made, other runners may attempt to advance at their own risk (tagging up is not necessary).
- A baserunner from second base may attempt to steal third once the ball is released from the pitcher’s hand (if he leaves earlier than that, the umpire may call him out). If the third baseman tags the base runner before he reaches the base, the runner is out. If the base-runner on 2B does not begin the steal attempt prior to the catcher throwing back to the pitcher (or even starting the motion to throw back), he must remain at second base.
- If the catcher throws to third base in an attempt to catch the base stealer, the runner is live and may attempt to run home. However, if he does not do so until the third baseman throws the ball (either to the pitcher or to first base – see below), he may no longer advance.
  - In no instance may a runner on first base advance on a stolen base attempt; as in any situation, he is forced back. If a pickoff attempt is made, he may advance after tagging up.
- If there is a runner already on third base, a runner on second is treated as if he is on any other base (and would be forced back).

## Equipment

- It is advisable for the catcher to wear all safety equipment. A mask is mandatory.
- The captain of the visiting team must bring one game ball. The captain of the home team must bring two (the extra ball will be introduced for the bottom of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning).



- Each captain must bring their own equipment.
- Each team must bring its own bats. A player may decide to not allow other players to use his bat.

### Scoring

- Teams are encouraged to keep their own stats.
- Teams must keep track of the number of runs they score.
- Captains are asked to report the final score in the event no commissioner is present at the game.

### Playoffs

- Players must participate in a minimum of seven games to be eligible for the playoffs (barring exceptions as determined by the commissioners). To count as a game played, the player must play at least four innings in the field, or have a minimum of two plate appearances. (If a player is injured and must be removed midgame, it will count as a game played; however, it must immediately be reported to one of the Commissioners.)
- In the event a game is rained out ***after the teams have arrived at the field***, all players ***who came to the field*** will be credited with a game played for playoff eligibility purposes.
- The number of playoff teams, as well as the format, will be determined before each season based on the number of teams in the league. For the 2026 (night) season, the top seven teams will advance to the playoffs, with the eighth and ninth place teams meeting in a play-in game for the final spot.
- Teams are seeded by: 1) Winning percentage; 2) Wins; 3) Head to head. Further tiebreakers are at the discretion of the commissioners, and will be communicated to captains if they potentially become relevant.
- Playoff rounds are best of three, with the higher seed serving as the “home” team for games 1 & 3.