



## St. Petersburg Parks & Recreation Department

# Softball League Rules

All games played in accordance with the current USA Softball Rule Book except as modified herein:

*Due to the recent safety measures taken in softball leagues, the City of St. Petersburg will provide a safety net for pitchers to use. The use of the net is not mandatory but heavily encouraged.*

## ROSTERS

Each manager is responsible for the integrity of his/her roster. Maximum of 20 players. If the manager intends to play, he/she must be listed on the team roster as a player as well as the manager. The "Official City Roster" is to be filled out completely in pen, legible and turned into the score keeper prior to the first scheduled game time. Play will not begin until the rosters are turned in, but the game clock could start if teams are not prepared and ready to go at GAME TIME. **Players are not legal until they have signed the roster. Illegal players will result in game forfeit for each game played in and player suspension and team manager suspension.** All roster changes must be made by the end of the sixth played game. Roster changes can be made by adding and deleting from the official team roster with the scorekeeper. If adding to the roster, the new player must sign the roster prior to playing. A player must be removed from one roster before they can be added to another, if playing in same league and may only change one time. Changes to the roster may be made at the league director's discretion after the sixth game played.

**WE STRONGLY SUGGEST** having at least 15 players or more on your roster to allow for unforeseen circumstances (i.e. – injuries, players quitting, scheduling conflicts, etc.). You may have "back up" players on your roster, up to the 20 available roster spaces. These players must sign the roster before the rosters close at the end of the sixth played game.

**If you play on more than 1 league the same night, it is YOUR responsibility to be at your field of play at game time.** Managers, if you have a player that plays another league the same night, it is your responsibility to be aware of this and make changes as needed. (Please see additional rule added to game procedure).

**PROCEDURE FOR PROTESTING PLAYER NOT ON TEAM ROSTER:** A check in the amount of \$50.00 payable to the City Of St. Petersburg must be submitted to the score keeper at the **time of protest**. Manager may request player picture ID through score keeper and umpire. Player must provide picture ID which will be compared with the lineup and roster to make sure the player is not playing under another person's name. If ID and players name match, the game is continued. If no picture ID, the game is forfeited. The score keeper will circle the player(s) in question and indicate in the remarks section the reason for the protest. The Athletic Office will check the records and determine the outcome.

If protest is upheld, the check will be returned. If protest is not upheld, the check will not be returned. All protests need to be made before the end of the 2nd inning for softball OR when a new player enters the game. **Scorekeepers and/or city staff reserves the right to check IDs at any time.**

## FORFEITS

Any team forfeiting three times within the ten-game schedule may be removed from the program and will lose their right to priority registration. **No refunds will be given.** If you know before your scheduled game time that you will not be able to field a team, call the Athletic Office at (727) 892-5223 so we can notify the other team and umpires. The sooner you call the better. Any team forfeiting during the season will be eliminated from all league tie breakers

## PICK UP PLAYERS

To minimize forfeits and maximize play we will have a pickup player rule. This rule is as followed: If you are short players, **you may pick up a player from your specific league.** This player must be a legal player and have signed their team's roster. You must let scorekeeper know **immediately.** There will be a 2-run penalty per player picked up. You may only pick up a max of four players. **In MEN'S and COED leagues, you may pick up to get to ten players.** These runs will be reported on score card after the completion of the inning. **If you do not report the players prior to the start of the game, you will be penalized four runs per player.** If you have a player show up late, this player may play, and you can keep the pickup player till you reach your tenth player. Once the ten players from your team shows up, the pickup player must leave the game and that

player takes their spot. Pick up players are not allowed in playoffs. If any team is abusing this rule, the league director may forfeit your privilege to use the pickup player rule.

## GAME PROCEDURE

Lineup is due to the **scorekeeper ten minutes prior to scheduled game time. If you do not have your line up turned in by game time (ready to start), an out may be given to your team's first at bat.** If you are consistently late turning in line up, you may be subject to a forfeit. The players **first and last name** are required on the lineup. Please print legible so scorekeeper can read the names. Play will not begin until both lineups have been given to the scorekeeper, but the game clock can start. SCOREKEEPER time is the official time. **Time will begin at first pitch.** No new innings will begin after the 60-minute mark. No grace period, team must be ready to play at scheduled game time. Please circle the acting manager's name on the lineup.

If your team is waiting on a player to arrive, game clock may be started with that official game time start. If this occurs a penalty of two runs per player, game is waiting on, will be given to the opposing team. If players do not arrive within ten minutes after game clock starts, the game WILL BE FORFEITED.

**SAFETY NET: A hit ball which hits the pitcher's safety net will be considered a dead ball/strike. If two strikes on the batter and they hit the net, the batter is out.**

- The safety net MUST BE placed directly in front of the pitching rubber.
- There will be a 4 ft. chalk line, the net MUST BE placed directly on this chalk line.
- The pitcher must stay behind the screen till the ball is hit. If not, the batter may have choice of the result of the play or take first base.
- The pitcher may choose to play any ball hit, after it is hit.

**GAME BALL:** The HOME team is required to furnish **a NEW game ball and a good, used (or new) back up ball** to the umpire before the start of each game (remember to get balls back at the end of the game). The umpires must be able to read the lettering on all balls given. Men and Coed use the 12-inch yellow ball, ASA logo, core 52 and 300 compression. **If your team does not have the CORRECT ball, you may be subject to forfeit. We sell these balls in the office for \$7/each. There is always a supervisor at fields. If you need a ball and do not see a supervisor, ask the scorekeeper to contact the Athletic Office.**

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** A team must have a minimum of eight players to start and finish a game. A double extra player may be used in the men's league (12 can bat, 10 of the 12 play the field). Players arriving after the lineup has already been given to the score keeper must be listed after the players in the original lineup and cannot bat until their spot is reached in the order. A late arrival may not take the field defensively after a pitch has been thrown in that half of the inning. A late arrival can only be added to the lineup to make ten players, not as an extra player. The late arrival can be put into the lineup to substitute for one of the ten players.

**SHORT-HANDED RULE:** Found at Rule 4, Section 1-D. Under no circumstances shall a team be permitted to bat less than eight. An inning or the game can end with an automatic out. The shorthanded rule is in effect unless a person gets hurt while playing during the game. Please see the compressed lineup rule below.

**COMPRESSED LINEUP:** If a team begins play with 9, 10 or 11 players, that team may continue a game with one less player than it started with **ONLY WHEN A PLAYER IS HURT WHILE PLAYING IN THE GAME** (and no other roster player is available to substitute). If the player is a base runner, he/she shall be declared out. The player must come out of the game IMMEDIATELY in order to compress the lineup, eliminating that player turn at bat with no out charged (in coed, if batting 12, this could potentially affect two players, male & female - the balance of the batting order must remain the same OR if batting 10, team may take the out.) If the injured player does not come out of the game immediately but decides to come out of the game later due to the injury, an out will be charged. Players leaving the game cannot return to that game's lineup.

**EXCEPTION:** A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return to the game if the lineup was not compressed. Should the players turn at bat come up and they are not ready to play, an out will be given.

**ONE & ONE COUNT:** Will be used in all leagues with the addition of one courtesy foul.

**DOUBLE BAG AT FIRST BASE:** When a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white portion and the batter-runner the colored portion of the base. **EFFECT:** The batter-runner is out when there is a play being made at first base and the batter-runner touches only the white portion.

**TIME LIMIT:** No new innings will begin after the 60-minute mark (home plate umpire's time is the official time). The score keeper will have a timer at their table that will be started when the umpire announces that the game has started. The game

will start with first pitch, unless line ups are not in, and the scorekeeper starts clock. All tied games will continue until the tie is broken using the tie breaker rule (person in lineup preceding the leadoff batter of that half inning will be placed at second base). This will continue until the tie is broken and a winner is declared.

Due to a major injury on the field during the game, the game clock will stop at 90 minutes regardless of the outcome of the game. If after 90 minutes a complete game has been played (five innings), the game will be considered final. The game clock will not stop for the injury. Discretion may be used during this situation by the umpires and/or City representatives. Championship game for tournament champion will not have a time limit.

**RUN RULE:** A run rule shall be in effect as follows: If one team is leading by 15 or more runs after four innings of play; if a team is leading by ten or more runs after five innings of play.

**HOME RUN RULE:** The progressive home run rule will be in effect for all leagues. The progressive rule does not apply in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning - meaning if you have hit your limit of homeruns, you may not hit any more in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning; If you have not met your homerun limit, you may still hit to your limit in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, but not progress. For any in excess, the ball is dead, the batter is out and no runners can advance. Homerun hitters have the option to hit and sit or run the bases.

Men's C-----3

Men's D-----2

Coed C-----2

Coed D-----2

Coed E-----1

**LEAGUE TIE BREAKER RULE & PLAYOFFS:** If teams have a tie record at end of season, the tie breaker rule will be in effect as follows: If tie between any teams -record head-to-head, if still tie greater number of runs scored against each other, if still tie it will be over all over run differential. (Runs for/runs against).

Any team with a forfeit is eliminated from all league tie breakers. They may still be part of playoffs. **Playoff Championship game with have no time limit.**

## COED SPECIFIC RULES

### NEW – RATIO MALE/FEMALE 6/4

**DEFENSIVE POSITIONS:** Ten players on the field at a time. No restrictions/requirements on where male/female players may play. No more than 6 males may play on the field at a time.

A 215 ft. line will be used in the outfield for female batters. Outfielders must be stationary and cannot cross the line until the ball has been hit **when a female is batting**.

Infielders must play on clay area until the ball has been hit for female players only. If teams shift when a female batter is up, they must stay on their side of the field.

**BATTING:** Teams may bat up to 12 players randomly, at any point in the batting order no more than **three** men may bat in a row. Any walk to a male batter will result in a two-base award, only if a female is batting behind and the female may have option to walk or bat (regardless of outs). If playing with only three female and out may be taking in the batting order where a female would bat. You may bat 8 men only when four females are present.

## MISC. RULES

- The legal delivery of a pitch must reach a height of at least six feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum height of ten feet from the ground.
- At the pitcher's discretion, they may pitch from the pitching rubber and back, up to six feet within the chalked box.
- A foul ball may not be caught over the fence to make an out.
- Players are not permitted to shift@ defensive positions for any batter. Players must play their defensive position until the ball is hit.
- **CURTESY RUNNER:** One runner per inning is allowed. **Any player** (same sex) may run. If a courtesy runner comes up to bat and they are still on base, they are out. Any player who is run for, must be safe and touch the base they will be on, prior to the courtesy runner being substituted in.
- **IF YOUR TEAM REGSITRTION IS NOT PAID BY THE THIRD WEEK, RAIN OR SHINE, THAT GAME AND EACH AFTER UNTILL PAID WILL BE A FOREIT.**

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Minimum age is 18.

- For league information concerning rules, schedules, rosters, and standings, please visit our adult sports website at [www.stpeteparksrec.org/sports](http://www.stpeteparksrec.org/sports).
- Fighting before, during or after the game and on or off the field, will not be tolerated and will be dealt with severely.
- All players must wear closed toed athletic shoes. Metal spikes and steel toes **are not** permitted in league play.
- A team trophy will be awarded to the LEAGUE winner. In playoffs a team trophy and individual award will be given to first and second place will receive a team trophy.
- Foul language and verbal/physical abuse directed at a player or umpire will be just cause for player suspension.
- The League director reserves the right to move teams within the various league held on the same night.
- The League director reserves the right to monitor and move individual players from leagues in which they are not of level play.
- **All players must always have ID with them.**
- **Any team manager that has illegal players or someone playing under a different name, will be suspended along with illegal players.**
- Team uniforms are not required for softball.
- All bases are at a 70' distance.

## BANNED BATS

There are several bats that are banned from league play. A list of bats are found on the [USA website](http://USA-Softball.org). ([www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats](http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats)), the [St. Petersburg Parks and Recreation Department website](http://www.stpeteparksrec.org/sports) ([www.stpeteparksrec.org/sports](http://www.stpeteparksrec.org/sports)), or you can contact the Athletic Office (727) 892-5224 for information on banned bats. There will also be a colored copy of the list with the score keepers for the umpires to refer to.

Any bat that is not ASA approved is NOT ALLOWED IN THE DUGOUT! If an illegal bat is found, the umpire will ask ONE TIME to have the bat removed. If it is not removed the bat owner will be ejected. If the bat owner cannot be determined, the game may be forfeited. **The bat MUST have the ASA logo stamp visible on the bat to be legal.**

**If a player is caught using an illegal bat, the player will be automatically ejected and not be replaced in the lineup.**

## RAIN OUTS

We will attempt to makeup all rain outs at the end of the schedule. It is the team MANAGER's responsibility to contact the Athletic office for times and dates of rain outs. For any games not made up prior to the start of the next program, a refund (per game) will be submitted, and the team will receive a credit for the upcoming season or the City will mail out a check for the amount due if the team is not returning. Any game discontinued by the umpire or League Director due to weather or other conditions will be considered a completed game if five or more complete innings have been played or if the home team has scored more runs in four or more innings. If the game is not completed, it will be rescheduled at a later date and will start over as a brand-new game.

## LIGHTNING

League Director will be watching the weather conditions. If lightning is seen, the League Director will determine the proximity of the lightning as follows: lightning seen, begin counting the seconds (one thousand one, one thousand two....) until thunder is heard. If the count is under a count of thirty, ALL activities will be stopped IMMEDIATELY and ALL players and participants etc. must leave the fields/dug outs and move to a safe location. After 30 minutes the League Director will determine if it is safe to resume play.

**Sign up for FREE automated texts or e-mails to be sent to you (and your players) when a rain out occurs.**  
**Sign up for the Rainout Line: [www.stpeteparksrec.org/adultleagues](http://www.stpeteparksrec.org/adultleagues) OR call 727-877-2236**

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Players, coaches, managers, or other team members (**this includes spectators**) will not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials or spectators or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Penalty could result in player ejection, removal of spectator and if needed, forfeit of game. Any use of cursing/swearing/profanity of any kind during league play may result in immediate ejection from the game. THIS is your warning:

**UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO PENALTY AT THE UMPIRE'S OR LEAGUE DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION.**

**PROFANITY RULE:** If a player uses profanity in an excessive or loud outburst, regardless of whom it is directed at (including themselves) an out may be given to that team. All Profanity Rule violations will be determined by the umpire's discretion. If the violation occurs with the batting team, the next batter up will be out. If this occurs with the defensive team, the first batter the next inning is out. Any intentional violations of this rule for any reason can result in a forfeit or ejection.

## **EJECTED PLAYER**

An ejected participant must leave the grounds immediately and have no contact with the umpires or participants in the game. Failure to comply may result in forfeit or the player may be POLICE TRESPASSED from the park. No substitute is allowed in the ejected player's position and their batting spot will be an automatic out. Once ejected from a game, a two-week suspension will follow automatically. The two-week suspension includes all sports and all nights for two weeks of scheduled games. This ejection could carry over into the following season if applicable. If the player ejected is not a legal player on the roster (all players must SIGN the roster), the coach will also be suspended for two games. **The League Direct has discretion to add a longer suspension due to severity of player actions or if have prior ejections.**

## **ALCOHOL AT THE BALL FIELDS**

It is **ILLEGAL** to have alcohol on City owned property. City Ordinance Section 21-38A. Any team found with alcohol in the dugout could result in forfeiting the game. Players, coaches, team affiliates may not leave the dugout during the game to drink alcohol. Team and/or player penalty will be at the umpire's and/or city representative's discretion. If any team is found drinking alcohol in the park, to include the surrounding parking lots, any City representative may forfeit a future game. If a team has TWO forfeits due to drinking alcohol, they will be removed from priority registration. This includes but is not limited to spectators, players, coaches, managers, any team affiliates.

## **PUBLIC RESTROOMS**

Facilities are centrally located on Woodlawn Sports Complex. Anyone caught outside and not using the restrooms will receive an immediate ejection and a two-game suspension.

If you have any questions, concerns, compliments or just want to talk softball, please contact the St. Petersburg Park and Recreation Department's Athletic Office at (727) 892-5224.

Thank you for your continued support of the softball league in the City of St. Petersburg.