

2023 Slow Pitch vs. Fast Pitch Rule Differences

Slow Pitch Rule		Fast Pitch Rule
Rule 1 Definitions		Rule 1 Definitions
Bunt Not legal in SP...out		Legal in FP, accept if foul on the third strike....out
Catchers Box: The catcher must remain in the box until the pitched ball is 1) batted, 2) touches the ground, the plate, or the batter, 3) reaches the catchers box		The catcher must remain in the box until the pitch is released
Chopped ball: A chopped ball occurs when the batter strikes downward with a chopping motion of the bat		No such rule in Fast pitch
Courtesy Runner: Adult SP, Masters, Senior SP and ADA players		Can be used in all Fast Pitch and in Fast Pitch with a ADA
Crow Hop is not used in SP		Illegal in FP. It is a re-start of the pitch.
Designated Player (DP) not used in SP		Player who is on the line-up card in the teams batting order but not on the defensive line-up.
Extra Player (EP) (optional player(s) in SP)		Used in JO Pool Play only.
Flex Not used in SP, except when using ADA rule		Player listed on the line-up card in the 10th spot and can play any defensive position and may enter the game on offense only in the DP position.
Foul Tip is now in effect for SP with stealing		Used in FP
Leaping Not allowed in SP		An act by the pitcher when both feet become airborne on the initial move and push from the pitcher's plate

Pivot Foot is the foot that the pitcher must keep in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball is released		Is the foot which must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate prior to pushing off.
Quick Pitch.....is an illegal pitch		Quick Pitch.....is a No Pitch
Stealing: Is the act of a runner attempting to advance during a pitch. Runners can advance once the pitched ball reaches the front edge of Home Plate		Runners may advance once the pitched ball leaves the pitchers hand.
Strike Zone: When the batter assumes a natural stance adjacent to home plate, the strike zone is that space over any part of home plate between the batter's back shoulder and the front knee.		...between the batters arm pits and the top of the knees.
Rule 2 Playing Field SP		Rule 2 Playing Field FP
Fence distances: 1) women min 265' max 300' 2) men min 300' max 325' 3) Coed min 275' max 300' 4) women 16" min 200' max 250' 5) men 16" min 250' max 300' 6) JO G10U/12U min 175' max 200' 7) G14U /18U min 225' max 250' 8) B10U min 200' max 225' 9) B12U min 225' max 250, 10) B14/16/18U min 275' max 300'		1) Women's min 200' max 250' 2) Men's min 225' max 275' 3) G10U min 150' max 175' 4) G12/14U min 175' max 200, 5) 16/18/18gold U min 200' max 225' 6) B10U min 150' max175' 7) B12/14U min 175' max 200' 8) B16U min 200' max 225' 9) B18U min 225' max 250' Men's Modified max 325'
Pitching Distance: 1) Women's, Men's, and Coed 50' 2) 16" men's and women's 38' 3) JO G 10U 40', 12U 46', 14/16/18U 50' 4) JO B 10U 40', 12U 46', 14/16/18U 50'		Women's and 18U Gold, 18U A/B, 16U A/B and 14U A/B 43", Men's 46', JO Girls 10U 35', 12/14/ 40', 16/18U 43', Boys JO 10U 35', 12U 40', 14/16/18U 46'
Bases: All Adult SP - 70', Women's 16" - 55', Men's 16" - 60', JO Girls 10/12U - 60', 14/16/18U - 65', JO Boys 12/14U - 60', 14/16/18U - 65'		All Fast Pitch is 60'
Batter's box: 16" SP only is 4 feet by 8 feet		Batter's box: 3 feet by 7 feet
Catcher's box: 10 feet deep by 8' 5" wide (10' 5" for 16" SP)		Catcher's box: 7' deep by 8' 5" wide
Home Plate...Senior SP uses 2 Home Plates		Home Plate....All use 1 Home Plate

Rule 3 Equipment SP		Rule 3 Equipment FP
Bats: SP bats must bear the 2000, 2004 or 2013 ASA or USA Softball Certification mark		Bats: FP bats must bear the 2000 or 2004 ASA or USA Softball all games Certification marks. Bats with 2013 ASA Certification Mark or USA Softball Slow Pitch are allowed in Men's, JO Boys Fast Pitch and Men's Modified. Exception: Any bat bearing the USA Softball, USSSA, or WBSC Certification mark and passes our Fast Pitch Compression Test thresholds will be allowed in the USA Softball Men's Major and Men's Open FP Championships.
Balls: SP uses 10" 11" 12" 14" and 16" diameter .440 or .520 max COR and .470 max COR for 16" (The 52/300 is the only ball allowed in Men's SP, Coed, Men's Masters and JO Girls and JO Boys 10 and 12U play. Seniors may use the 44/375 ball) A molded 11" and 12" ball with facsimile red stitches may be used.		FP uses only 11 and 12 inch diameter balls 275-375 compression and COR is .470 max
Catchers mask: JO Slow Pitch must wear an approved batter's helmet with ear flaps, the catchers helmet and mask, or an approved plastic face mask/guard with the catchers helmet. A throat protector is optional		Adult must wear a mask with a throat protector. Helmets are optional. Cannot wear a plastic face mask/guard. JO must wear a mask with a throat protector and an approved helmet with ear flaps.
Shin Guard and Chest protector: Not required for SP		Both are required for JO FP
Batting Helmets: Must be worn by JO offensive players and players acting as coaches. Must have ear flaps and be NOCSAE approved. Not required but permissible for adults		All offensive players must wear double ear flap NOCSAE approved helmets. JO offensive players must wear NOCSAE approved helmets face mask / guard.
Helmets may have a mirror-like surface.		Helmets shall have a non glare (no mirror-like) surface.
Headwear: Ball caps, visors of mixed team colors are optional. All headgear must be worn properly.		Adult males must properly wear alike ball caps. Female Fast Pitch: ball caps and visors are optional, may be mixed in style, a team color or black, white, gray or beige.

Shoes: JO, Coed, and Seniors cannot wear metal, hard plastic, or polyurethane spikes		Exception: 18U A/B, 18U Gold, 16U A/B, 16U Gold and 14U A/B can wear metal cleats
Uniforms: Alike in style and color (exception: Men's D and E/Rec, Women's Open, Women's C and D, Coed C and D SP - matching shirts only)		Alike in style and color
Rule 4 Players, Coaches, Substitutes (SP)		Rule 4 Players, Coaches, Substitutes (FP)
Players: A team shall consist of the following: Ten Players, Ten players with an EP, Senior (50-55-60) 10 defensive with 1 or 2 Extra Players, Senior (65-70-75) 11 defensive players and 1 or 2 Extra Players, Coed 10 players 5 and 5, Coed with an Extra Players 12 players 6 and 6.		9 or 10 players, 9 defensive players with a DP/FLEX (JO Fast Pitch only) Allows one additional extra player (EP) to be added to the lineup allowing 10 to bat and any batter to play defense.
Section 4C 3c and d: Seniors can have any legal number of players up to the number of roster present in the batting order. The shorthanded rule will be in effect. 65-Over Division may use 10 or 11 defensive players at tournament director's discretion.		No such rule in Fast Pitch
Coed penalty for using wrong gender number on defense in infield or outfield		No such penalty in FP
Shorthanded: Start or finish with as few as 9 batters.		May continue to play until they cannot bat 8 in FP or less than 9 when using an EP in JO FP.
...ADA Rule...10,11, or 12 players can be used		9 or 10 players can be used
DP: Not used in SP		An option in FP that must be noted on the line up prior to the start of the game.
EP: Optional and must be known prior to the start of the game		Not allowed in Men's FP.

Rule 5: The Game (SP)		Rule 5: The Game (FP)
Scoring runs: One run shall be scored each time a runner touches first, second, third, and home. Exception: All Adult and JO Boys SP do not have to run the bases on over the fence home runs or Four Base Awards.		In all Fast Pitch games, players must touch all bases.
Home Run Rule: SP has home run limits for Adult Men, Women, Master and Senior levels of play.		No such regulations
Note: The CEO will establish a home run limit for Men's Super SP		Does not apply for FP
Men's Seniors SP Only - restricts number of runs allowed per inning except for 7th inning, last inning of time limit or any extra innings.		No such rule
Run Ahead Rule: Men's SP (except Class A, B and Seniors) 20 after 3 innings, 15 after 4 innings, 10 after 5 innings of play. Class A, B, and Seniors: 20 after 4 innings and 15 after 5 innings. 16" SP: 12 after 4 innings and 10 after 5 innings.		Men's Fast Pitch (only) 15 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings, and 7 after 5 innings Women's and JO Fast Pitch: 15 after 3, 12 after 4 and 8 after 5. Modified: 15 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings and 10 after 3 innings.
Time Limits: Where applicable in JO SP, time limits will be 1 hour and 10 minutes. No time limit for Boys JO 14U, 16U & 18U SP		Where applicable in JO FP, time limits will be 1 hour 40 minutes.
Tie-Breaker Rule: No such rule in SP except Seniors, All JO Girls and JO Boys 10U & 12U will play the tie-breaker rule.		Women's and Men's 40 and Over and 45 and Over after completing 7 innings and JO Girls after completing 7 innings or the time limit has expired.
Rule 6C Pitching Regulations (SP)		Rule 6A Pitching Regulations (FP)

Preliminaries: Both feet on the ground with one or both feet on the pitcher's plate. Seniors up to 10 feet behind the pitcher's plate. The pivot foot must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground in Seniors throughout the delivery.		The pitcher must have the ball in the glove or the hand to take the pitching position. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24" length of the pitcher's plate. The shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases. The pitcher shall take a position with their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and their non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate.
Must come to a complete stop in front of the body and the front of the body must face the batter, and maintain this position for at least 1 second. The pitcher cannot simulate a legal pitch while not in contact with the pitcher's plate.		The pitcher may take a backward step before, simultaneous with or after hands are brought together. FP and Modified must bring the hands together for not less than 1 second or more than 10 seconds before the release.
No requirement to take a signal		Must take a signal or simulate taking a signal while on the pitcher's plate with hands separated.
16" SP may attempt a pick off		No pick off allowed
Senior Slow Pitch has a strike mat		No such rule
Starting the pitch: The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion with the ball after the required stop.		The pitch starts when the hands are separated after they come together.
Legal Delivery: The delivery must be a continuous motion.		Cannot put the hands together after they have separated.
The pitcher must deliver the ball toward Home Plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip with an underhand motion. The palm maybe over or under the ball.		The Pitcher must not make more than two revolutions of the arm on the windmill pitch. Delivery must be underhanded with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
Pitch released with moderate speed		No regulation on the speed
Delivery with an arc of not less than 6' and not more than 10' or 12' in Seniors		No regulation on the arc

Pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground in Seniors until the release of the ball		The pitcher must push off with the pivot foot but the release does not have to be prior to the push. Male and JO Boys may leap with toes down. Women and JO Girls may have both feet in the air
Must pitch within 5 seconds of receiving the ball back from the catcher or the umpire says play ball.		Pitcher has 20 seconds
Ball that touches the ground before home plate or hits home plate is dead.		Cannot deliberately drop or bounce the ball to prevent the batter from hitting the ball. If the ball does bounce it remains live. Can only be called a strike if swung at.
A step may or may not be taken.....		A step must be taken and be between the 24" pitcher's plate in Women's and JO Girls. Men and JO Boys do not have to stay in between the 24" pitcher's plate
Foreign Substance/Protective Wraps: The pitcher may wear tape on the fingers or a sweatband on the wrist or forearm of the pitching arm.		May not wear anything, in the umpire's judgment, on the pitching hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or thigh that is distracting to the batter. The pitcher may not wear tape on their fingers. The pitcher may use an approved drying agent in addition to powdered Resin. The Resin is to be kept on the ground and the drying agent in the pitcher's pocket.
Catcher: Must remain in the catcher's box until the ball is batted or touches the plate, ground or reaches the catchers box.		Section 6 Catcher: Must remain in the box until the ball is released.
Quick pitch: Not allowed! It would be judged an illegal pitch.		Referred to as a no pitch in FP
Warm up pitches: Not more than 1 minute or 3 pitches.		Not more than 1 minute or 5 pitches
No regulation on throwing to a base		Cannot throw to a base with the foot in contact with the pitcher's plate.

No Pitch: If the ball slips out of the pitcher's hand during the delivery or the back swing. The ball is dead and all action on that pitch is canceled.		Section 11 Dropped Ball: If the ball slips from the hand during the delivery it is a ball on the batter and the ball remains live. Runners can advance at their own risk.
Rule 7 Batting (SP)		Rule 7 Batting (FP)
Must use On-Deck Circle closest to their bench area.		Section 1A, EXCEPTION: On Deck Circle - Men's and Women's Fast Pitch, Men's Modified and all JO Classifications may use either on-deck circle as long as it is behind the batter.
Batting order: No DP is used		DP/FLEX allowed in FP.
Batting - Adult SP (except Seniors), JO Girls, Boys 14U, 16U & 18U will start with a 1 ball and 1 strike count. Seniors and JO Boys 10U and 12U do not.		Not in Fast Pitch
Batting position: The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher to the other batter's box while the pitcher is in the pitching position or anytime thereafter prior to the release of the pitch.		Cannot step across to the other box while the pitcher is taking the signal.
A strike is called by the umpire: For each ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and the batter does not swing. It is not a strike if the ball hits the ground or the plate and then the batter swings at it. SP with stealing for each ball entering the strike zone.		Any ball entering the strike zone or swung at after bouncing
A strike is called for each pitch legally swung at and missed by the batter. Without stealing the ball is dead.		Ball is live.
Foul tip ball is dead in SP without stealing, live in the game with stealing and 16" SP.		Ball is live.
A strike is called for each foul ball including the third strike.		For each foul ball with less than 2 strikes.
A strike is called when any part of the batter's person or clothing is hit with a batted ball while in the batter's box.		Only with less than 2 strikes.

A ball is called on the batter: For each legally pitched ball which does not enter the strike zone and the batter does not swing, touches the ground before reaching home plate, or touches home plate. Any ball swung at after hitting the ground before HP or touches HP is a ball. The ball is dead.		Any ball that does not enter the strike zone not swung at or touch the ground before reaching home plate or touches home plate and not swung at. The ball remains live.
For each illegally pitched ball not swung at : The ball is dead and runners may not advance. SP with Stealing the ball is live unless it hits the ground prior to reaching home plate or hits home plate.		For each illegally pitched ball not swung at or swung at and missed is a Dead Ball and (Men's FP) runners are entitled to advance one base without liability to be put out.
If the ball hit the batter outside the strike zone the ball is dead and runners may not advance		Ball is dead and the batter is awarded 1B and all runners one base if forced.
The Batter is out: when a batter bunts or chops the ball		If the batter bunts the ball foul after the second strike, if it is caught the ball remains live
16" SP if the batter intentionally hits a ball that first strikes the ground in order to prevent a pick off attempt		Batter in Fast Pitch is not out and the ball is live
After a third strike including a foul ball that is hit after two strikes		When a called or swinging strike is caught by the catcher
NO rule on dropped third strike		When the batter has three strikes and/or if there are fewer than two outs and first base is occupied.
<i>(Adult SP except Seniors and Masters) the batter shall enter the batter's box with a 1 ball and 1 strike count.</i>		Not used in FP
Rule 8 Batter-Runner and Runner SP		Rule 8 Batter-Runner and Runner FP

The batter becomes a batter-runner: There is no dropped third strike rule in SP		When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are less than 2 outs and 1B is not occupied and anytime there are 2 outs.
When four balls have been called by the umpire. The batter is awarded 1B. The ball is dead and runners may not advance unless forced. Exception SP with stealing and the ball does not hit the ground before reaching HP or hits HP or the batter. The Batter-Runner may only advance to 1B unless a play is made on another runner or an errant throw.		The ball is live unless blocked.
A batter may be intentionally walked by simply notifying the plate umpire to award first base without pitching any pitches.		An intentional walks in Fast Pitch requires four pitches .
Catcher's obstruction has no bunt or squeeze in SP		On a swing or attempted bunt, the catcher or any other fielder prevents the batter from striking the ball, touch their bat with a runner on third base trying to score by means of a squeeze. The ball is dead and the runner on 3B is awarded home plate. All other runners advance if forced.
A pitched ball not swung at nor called a strike, touches the batter or any part of their clothing the ball is dead.		The ball is dead and the batter is awarded 1B provided there is an attempt to avoid being hit.
Batter-Runner is out: If the catcher drops a third strike the ball is dead and the batter is out. The Ball is live in SP w/ stealing.		The ball is live when the catcher drops a third strike.
The batter-runner is not out when they enter the dugout on a home run or 4 base award when they are not required to run the bases. The ball is dead.		The batter-runner is out when they fail to advance to 1B and enters the team area after a batted fair ball, base on balls, hit batter, or dropped third strike. They must run the bases on Home runs and 4 base awards.
The batter-runner is out for excessive over the fence home runs.		There are no penalties for the number of HR
No pick offs in SP without stealing.		Pickoffs allowed in all FP.

Touching bases in legal order: Awarded bases do not have to be touched in legal order in All Adult and JO Boys SP on home runs or 4 base awards.		All awarded bases or home runs the bases must be touched in legal order.
Runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out in SP with stealing when the ball reaches home plate.		When the ball leaves the pitchers hand
JO SP no stealing allowed.		Stealing is allowed in all divisions of play.
16" SP runners may lead off at the risk of being picked off		No runners may lead off in any game of FP
Runners are entitled without liability to be put out: When forced to vacate a base because the batter-runner was awarded a base on balls. The ball is dead in SP without stealing.		The ball remains live. Any runner affected may advance one base and may advance farther with liability to be put out
When a pitched ball goes out of play the ball is dead and runners cannot advance. Exception SP with stealing are advanced one base.		The ball is dead and the runners are entitled to advance one base without liability to be put out.
On an illegal pitch that is not hit, the ball is dead and no runners are advanced. The ball is live in SP w/ stealing.		The ball is live and runners are advanced one base in Men's FP.
(SP without stealing) Runners may not advance on an illegal pitch not swung at.		(FP JO Only) Eliminates the penalty of advancing a runner one base without liability to be put out when an illegal pitch is committed.
A runner must return to their base: If a pitched ball hits a batter the ball is dead and no one can advance.		Same as SP except the Batter is awarded 1B and runners may advance if forced.
No umpire interference with a catcher's throw except in SP with stealing and 16" SP.		This is a delayed dead ball and if the runner is out the ball remains live. If the runner is safe the ball is dead and runner is returned to the base occupied at the time of the interference.
When stealing is not allowed, Runners must return to their base after each pitch		Runners may steal on any pitched ball.

SP with stealing runners may advance after the ball reaches home plate		Runners may advance when the ball leaves the pitchers hand
The runner is out: if they fail to keep in contact with the base until the ball is batted, touches the ground or reaches home plate. Exception is 16" SP when the runner can leave the base when the ball is in play.		The runner is out when the runner fails to keep contact with the base until the ball leaves the pitchers hand
Look Back rule: Does not exists in SP.		Requires the runners to return or advance in several different situations.
All Adult Slow Pitch may use one courtesy runner once per half inning. (Exception) Coed teams may use one male and one female courtesy runner per half inning. Seniors can use unlimited courtesy runners per inning. A courtesy runner on base will be removed to bat and the original runner will be called out. A substitute is not allowed for a courtesy runner. No 2nd courtesy runner is permitted. (Adult SP) A Courtesy Runner shall be offically in the game after a pitch, legal or illegal, or a play made. (Seniors SP) A Courtesy Runner is in the game when umpire is notified.		All Fast Pitch can use courtesy runners for the pitcher and catcher only (Exception Men's Masters and Seniors)
Seniors Slow Pitch:		
1) Defensive players must touch the original HP and runners must the second HP		Not applicable in FP
2) Must touch the second HP to score		Not applicable in FP
3) Runners tagged by a defensive player will not be out		Not applicable in FP
4) Defense must touch the original HP for an out		Not applicable in FP
5) If a runner touches the original HP the runner is out and the ball remains live		Not applicable in FP
6) Once the runner passes a commitment line they cannot return to 3B		Not applicable in FP

7) If the runner continues down the regular fouled line and interferes the runner will be call out and the ball is dead		Not applicable in FP

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