

## Pinto Softball Rules 2-28-25

**Age:** Player must be **8 years of age or younger** as of **September 1 of the current year.**

### Playing Field

- **Pitching Distance:** 25ft
- **Base Lines:** 50ft

### Equipment

- A standard 11in softball (guideline reference, maximum compression of 375 lbs. and a maximum COR of .47).
- All players must wear uniforms alike in color and design.
- Shoes with rubber cleats may be worn (metal cleats are not allowed).
- **Protective Equipment:**
  - All players must wear a protective helmet with a face mask and double ear flaps when batting, base running, or in the on-deck circle.
  - Catchers must wear a mask with a throat protector, body protector, protective helmet, and shin guards.
  - Masks are highly recommended for all infielders and **required** for the pitcher.
- No jewelry is allowed during the game.
- All bats must be ASA fast-pitch approved and must not have barrels larger than 2.25".

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### Game Rules

- **Game Length:** 6 innings or **1 hour 45 minutes**, whichever comes first.\*If time expires between innings, the next inning will still be played. The top of a new inning officially begins immediately after the third out is recorded in the bottom of the previous inning.
- \*Game time will begin immediately after Coaches meeting
- **Run Limits Per Inning:**
  - Teams can score **5 runs per inning** until the **6th inning**, where the limit is **10 runs**.
- **Mercy Rule:**
  - **15-run rule after 3 innings**
  - **12-run rule after 4 innings**

- *If there is time remaining, teams are expected to continue playing until the time limit is reached.*
- **Game Suspension:**
  - If a game is called due to darkness, weather, or safety concerns, it will be **rescheduled only if fewer than 4 innings and less than 1 hour 45 minutes have been played.**
- **Sportsmanship:**
  - Team enthusiasm is encouraged, but all chatter must be positive and directed only toward teammates.
  - Chants or cheers directed at opponents (e.g., "Hey batter-batter swing," "slaughter rule," etc.) are **not allowed.**
  - A **first violation** results in a **warning** to the team's manager. A **second violation** results in a **forfeit**, and the League Director will address the matter with the team manager.

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## Base Running

- **No leading off or stealing.** Runners must wait until the ball is put into play before leaving the base.
- **Live Runner Rule:** A baserunner remains live until the umpire calls "dead ball."
- **Advancing on Outfield Hits:**
  - If the ball is hit into the outfield, runners may advance as many bases as possible.
  - If the runner is **not halfway to the next base** when the ball is thrown back into the infield, they **must return** to the previous base.
  - If the runner is **more than halfway**, they are a live runner and can be tagged or forced out.
  - **The umpire determines the runner's position.**
  - *The infield is defined as the interior of the baselines.*
- **Overthrow Rules:**
  - Runners **may not advance** on an overthrow to first base.
  - Runners **may advance** on overthrows to second, third, or home plate.
- **Sliding & Contact:**
  - Runners must either **slide or attempt to avoid contact.**
  - *The umpire has discretion in determining if a runner made an appropriate attempt to avoid contact.*
- **If a ball hits a coach in the field of play**, the batter is awarded **first base** and all runners advance **one base.**

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## Hitting

- The team must use a **continuous batting order**.
- A late-arriving player is added to the bottom of the lineup.
- **In Regular Season Games:**
  - A player removed due to illness or injury **cannot return** and will not be counted as an out when their turn comes up in the lineup.
  - If a player's absence causes their team to drop below the minimum number of players, their team **forfeits the game**.
- **No bunting.**
- **Fake bunting is prohibited.** A batter cannot fake a bunt, retract the bat, and then take a full swing.

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## Pitching

- **Pitching Format:**
  - **Players pitch the first 3 innings.**
  - **Coaches pitch all following innings.**
- **Pitching Distance: 25 feet** for both players and coaches. A pitching rubber must be in place.
- **Player Pitching Limits:**
  - A player **may pitch only 1 inning per game.**
  - **One pitch thrown counts as a full inning.**
  - If a pitcher **hits 3 batters**, they must be removed from the mound and cannot return to pitch in that game.
- **No walks.**
  - If a pitcher throws four balls, the **hitting team's coach takes over the at-bat** until:
    - The batter **strikes out**,
    - The batter **hits the ball in play**, or
    - **A total of 8 pitches** (including what the player pitcher threw) have been thrown.
- **Coach Pitch Mechanics:**
  - Coaches must pitch **underhand** with at least **one foot on the 25ft mark at release**.
- **If a batted ball hits the coach pitching:**
  - It is **considered a foul ball strike**.
  - If it was already a two-strike count, the batter is **not out**.
  - If the umpire determines that the coach **intentionally** interfered, the batter is **out**.

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## Fielding & Defense

- **Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field.**
- **Defensive Positions:**
  - A team may field **10 defensive players** (4 outfielders).
  - The pitcher must play **even with or a step behind** the coach pitcher.
- **Minimum Play Requirement:** Each player must play at least **two innings in the field**.
- **Substitutions:**
  - Players may re-enter the game at different positions but must **stay in the original batting order**.
- **Pitcher's Mound Placement: 25 feet**

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## Tie-Breaker Rule

- **Tie Breaker:**
  - The inning begins with **no outs** and the last batted out on **2nd base**.
  - Complete each extra inning as if it were the last inning (i.e., **run limit of 10** in extra innings).
  - If no winning team emerges after **2 extra innings**, the game is a **tie**.

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## Tournament Rules

- All tournament schedules **will be played as scheduled**.
- **Scheduling conflicts due to school, weather, or league-approved events must be submitted by town presidents to the tournament host before the first scheduled game.**